

Ki in Aikido

A SAMPLER OF KI EXERCISES



BY C.M. SHIFFLETT

Ki in Aikido

In memory of George Simcox, Father of Books
1933-2000

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Introduction

Introduction

What is Aikido?

Aikido is a relatively new martial art dating from the 1920's when its founder, Morihei Ueshiba (*O-Sensei*), began to develop what he came to call *Aikido*. *Aikido* means "the way (*do*) to harmony (*ai*) with *ki*."

The Japanese ideograms (*kanji*) for Aikido are made up of roots and word elements which bring a wealth of concept and meaning to those who can see them for what they are.

Ai, to fit, to be in harmony or agreement with.

The kanji character for 'Ai' (合) is composed of three horizontal strokes at the top and a square base. The top strokes are of varying lengths, with the longest on the left and the shortest on the right. The square base is formed by two vertical strokes and a bottom horizontal stroke.

The lower strokes form a square which represents a mouth or opening such as that of a teapot. The upper three strokes originally formed a lid or stopper. The combination suggests two things which harmonize or fit together, such as the lid on a teapot, the cork in a bottle, the round peg in the round hole.

Ki spirit, breath, energy.

The kanji character for 'Ki' (氣) is composed of a large, stylized 'air' radical on the left and a 'rice' radical on the right. The 'air' radical is formed by three curved strokes, and the 'rice' radical is formed by a cross within a pot-like shape.

The Japanese *ki* symbol comes from the ancient Chinese character for *Qi*, steam, made up of elements representing sun and fire, the sources of steam. The upper three strokes represent the clouds of steam rising from a boiling pot of rice with a lid and handle. The cross within the pot represents a stalk of rice with four individual grains. Together these elements indicate vapor, breath, or spirit.

Do, way, path.

The kanji character for 'Do' (道) is composed of a 'road' radical on the left and a 'person' radical on the right. The 'road' radical is formed by a square base and a vertical stroke, and the 'person' radical is formed by a vertical stroke and a horizontal stroke.

The elements of the symbol represent hair on a human head and legs walking along a path or what, to my eye, appear to be the square paving sections of a sidewalk or street. The combination represents a person walking down a road. *Do* now means a road or path in the literal sense; by extension it can mean a course of study, a weekly recreation, or a way of life.

Aikido incorporates techniques from traditional martial arts such as *ju-jutsu* and is rooted in the Japanese *samurai* warrior tradition of *budo*.

Budo is often interpreted as the "way of the sword." However, the symbol is made up of two parts, one representing a spear and the other meaning "to stop, or cease using" — hence the way to stop (or stop using) the sword.

It is the way, notes Ueshiba's student Mitsugi Saotome "to halt the danger of the thrusting blade" but not in the usual sense. "*Bu*" said Ueshiba, "is Love "

Morihei Ueshiba was an intensely religious man and a renowned martial artist. His transformation and integration of these two apparently separate and disparate paths began in 1925 with the challenge of a duel from a high-ranking swordsman. Ueshiba had no desire to duel, and refusing to draw his sword, he evaded his opponent's furious cuts and thrusts until the man gave up, exhausted, and begged his forgiveness¹.

On returning home, Ueshiba was struck by a startling vision.

*All at once I understood the nature of creation: the Way of a Warrior is to manifest Divine Love, a spirit that embraces and nurtures all things
Tears of gratitude and joy streamed down my cheeks. I saw the entire earth as my home, and the sun, moon, and stars as my intimate friends
All attachment to material things vanished*

Then in 1940,

Around two o'clock in the morning as I was performing ritual purification, I suddenly forgot every martial art technique I had ever learned. All of the techniques handed down from my teachers appeared completely anew. Now they were vehicles for the cultivation of life, knowledge, virtue, and good sense, not devices to throw and pin people.

During the worst fighting of World War II, Ueshiba declared.

The Way of the Warrior has been misunderstood as a means to kill and destroy others. Those who seek competition are making a grave mistake. To smash, injure, or destroy is the worst sin a human being can commit. The real way of the Warrior is to prevent slaughter. It is the Art of Peace, the Power of Love

It is this concern for the opponent that makes Aikido radically different from other martial arts. Two ancient concepts of *budo* are *ai nuke*, "mutual preservation," and *katsu jin ken*, "the saving of your enemy's

¹ Ueshiba's barehanded duel with a swordsman is recreated in *Taigi* 22

life" Both imply choice, action, and responsibility. This is a difficult way, an internal spiritual discipline, that offers neither the thrill of justified vengeance and murder nor the congratulatory self-righteousness of passivism.

Aikido even redefines the idea of "enemy" or "opponent." It is the only martial art recommended by counselors of parents of *abusive children*.

Imagine a small or aged parent whose 17-year-old 200-pound star full-back son or grandson comes home drunk. By law the parent is responsible — yet there must be no harm to the child. The same dilemma of care and concern in a potentially dangerous situation has left many a strong man helpless.

Many karate students walk into the dojo, watch for a few minutes, decide "it's faking" and walk back out. One night came a young man with a black belt in Tae Kwan Do — and a problem. His fraternity brothers would come home roaring drunk, throwing punches and kicks to get him to show them "his moves" never realizing that his karate is designed to break ribs and smash throats. "What can I do?" he asked. "These are my brothers. I don't want to hurt them." His care, compassion, and unwillingness to harm were getting him beaten up. We showed him *tenkan*, a "turning of the other cheek." He stayed.

Aikido is designed to control rather than destroy the opponent. The Aikidoist does not punch or kick to injure, does not block or resist attacks but blends with, redirects and transforms the attacker's energy through use of movement and *ki*.

Shin-Shin Toitsu Aikido ("Aikido with Mind-Body Coordinated") is the style of Aikido founded by Ueshiba's student Koichi Tohei in 1974. It differs from other styles primarily in the formal study of *ki* development and *ki* testing which provide an unusual opportunity to actually test, measure, and evaluate concepts and relationships between mind and body spirit which must otherwise be dismissed as "flaky New Age weirdness" or accepted on faith, despite doubts or fears.

What is Ki?

Many Aikidoists think of *ki* as the universal spirit present in all things. This seemingly exotic concept has much in common with the ancient Hebrew *ruach*, meaning "smoke," "wind," or "spirit" and with the ancient Greek *pneuma* meaning "air," "breath," or "spirit."¹

The Greek word is familiar in modern English pertaining to air or other gases, or their mechanical properties. But the older, deeper meaning is the animating breath of life — the *spirit*. In the original Greek of the New Testament of the Bible, the word appearing in English as "spirit" or "soul" is actually one of two Greek words — *psyche* (also meaning "life" and equivalent to the Latin *anima*) or *pneuma*. And our English spirit is from the Latin *spiritus*, literally meaning "breath" (as in respiration, "breath-ing").

God [Theos] is a spirit [pneuma].

— John 4:24

The wind [pneuma] blows wherever it pleases. You may hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit [pneumatōs].

— John 3.8

"Harmonious *ki*" or *aiki* may also be thought of as "that which is right." Sometimes it is "*aiki*" (right) to fall or fail, or to cause an opponent to fall or fail, but "not *aiki*" to add punishment to action. This moves you from the negative trap of revenge thinking, the neutral of retribution, to the positive of control or constraint for the sake of all concerned, to accord with what is right

This accord and harmony, softness and relaxation is not *weakness*.

Care and concern for the attacker is not mere sentimentality, nor does it lessen effectiveness.

¹ "If we may trust to language," noted Freud (*Moses and Monotheism*, 1938) "it was the movement of the air that provided the image of spirituality, since the spirit borrows its name from the breath of wind (*animus*, *spiritus*, Hebrew. *ruach*, smoke)." Hence the "cloths hung in groves" (referred to in the Old Testament of the Bible) were essentially serving as "spirit" detectors.

Dave Butts was a devastating All-Pro defensive tackle for the Washington Redskins football team. His job was to knock down the opposing quarterback, and he did it very well. But watching Butts and his quarry go down, you would often see him slip an arm under his opponent's helmet to cushion the fall; or roll so that his body (300-some pounds) would not come down on top of the other player. Contrast this approach with that of players who delight in body slamming their opponents.

Nonaka *Sensei* of Hawaii presents a practical reason for not bashing the opponent: "He will not be happy." None of us can afford to fill the world with people who feel they have something to avenge.

Aikido offers an unusual combination of care and effectiveness.

Wise kindness.

Tough love.

The Concept of "Reality"

Ki can also be defined as "attention" or "mind." While the concept of "extending *ki*" is vitally important in Aikido, what it actually is that you are extending is not so important. A strong case can be made for "it doesn't matter" if the end result is the same, if the final results are real. Beginners commonly have difficulty with this concept. I, like many others, wasted at least six months debating whether what I was seeing was "real" or "not real." Experience won.

To some, the challenge of believing in the existence of *ki* is the challenge of believing in the existence of the spirit, the reality of things unseen¹.

If the idea of extending a beam of energy from your fingers out to the edge of the cosmos violates your sense of reality, then think of it as "attention" or "mind" and use this concept as a working hypothesis, a tool, as did Einstein riding his hypothetical beam of light. If this were true, what *would* you see? What *would* happen?

Did Einstein "really" go riding on a beam of light? Not in the usual sense, but the thought was "real" in that it produced "real" results. He was able to see using this image and what he saw is now considered very real indeed

If you send your mind to the core of the earth so that anyone trying to move you must move the planet, are you really physically attached to millions of tons of rock?

Not in the usual sense, but if the thought results in real stability and real power and your opponent really can't budge you, how is this *un-real*?

1. Perhaps this is why the man known as *Yeshua*, or *Jesus*, chose for his disciples sailors, men who could see the wind.

Images and Visualization

The exercises in this *Sampler* contain a variety of images.

In Aikido, just as in gymnastics, dance, or golf, the image is a vital part of the technique; we create the image in the mind then let the body catch up. Imaging helps or allows the body to move, react, or feel in ways that may not be possible when working from the purely intellectual.¹

Visualization and *ki* extension raise the startling possibilities that our thoughts do become reality on some level. Yet *ki* does not violate the laws of physics; it allows physical actions to move and flow more freely. In a strictly physical sense, holding a certain image in your mind may allow tiny physical adjustments — a slight shift in weight, a slight rounding of the chest, a faint drop in the shoulders, the use or relaxation of certain muscles — to occur on an unconscious level which would be far more difficult on a conscious level. It may produce an equally important change in attitude, in our perception of limits and boundaries.

In Aikido, a common image is that of water. Water flows yet is incompressible. It is soft and yielding but also produces the rock-hardness of the firehose. It can carve the rock, shape the coastline, bathe the child.

Be a water drop.

Be a wave flowing over and around a rock, rolling in and out from the shore.

Be a leaf in the water floating with the current.

Play with the images until you have learned the feeling that the images invoke — then reproduce that feeling.

¹ In the 60's, instructions for dancing "The Twist" were reduced to the following: "Dry your bottom with a bath towel while rubbing out a cigarette with your toe." Complex coordination of movements was immediately possible when translated into these familiar images.

What Is One-Point?

At least part of what Aikidoists call the One-Point, center, or *hara*, is what physicists call the “center of gravity,” the point where gravity acts on the body as a whole. When the normal human stands upright in a normal posture, the center of mass is approximately between the spine and the navel. The vertical location of the One-Point is commonly said to be about two inches below the navel. If you fold your hands in front of you and drop them to your abdomen, your little fingers will be approximately at your One-Point — sometimes.



Actually, the One-Point is not a rigid, precisely defined point nor is it to be “kept” in its place. It is in different places in people of different size and body build and it is in different places in one person depending on what that person is doing in the sense of dynamic equilibrium. It may even be outside of the body.

A standing immobile body is stable as long as the One-Point remains over its support — the feet. If the center of mass moves outside of its support (the feet) gravity pulling on that point creates an imbalance. An additional tug by the tiniest person can produce spectacular results.



Testing for One-Point and Ki

Shin-Shin Toitsu Aikido emphasizes coordination of mind and body to produce inner strength and stability. A person with mind and body coordinated conveys an image of indefinable calmness and stability. *Ki* testing defines that state of calmness and stability through exercises known as *ki* tests. Although it is impossible to test the mind directly, the mind can be tested *through* the body.

The point of testing is not to see if *uke* (the tester) can defeat *nage* (the one performing the technique). *Ki* testing is not a physical contest but a demonstration of *nage*'s current state of mind-body coordination. *Uke* serves as a biofeedback sensor to aid *nage* in learning new concepts of strength, and calmness, and stability. This relationship between mind and body, body and spirit is the secret behind Aikido and other martial arts and even offers a testable, sensible rationale for positive, creative, everyday living.

Exercises are grouped according to the four basic rules for practice of Mind-Body Coordination. This arrangement is somewhat artificial as all of these principles work together. With any one of the principles you can pass any *ki* test; on losing any one, you can fail any *ki* test.

Rules For Mind-Body Coordination

Each of the rules below is a natural extension of the one before.

- Keep One-Point
- Relax completely
- Keep weight underside
- Extend *ki*

What You're Really Looking For

The point of testing is not to demonstrate spectacular strength or dramatic failure — just a difference. Perhaps a tiny, subtle increase in firmness. A slightly longer period of resistance. Perhaps no difference to *uke*, but less effort by *nage* to maintain stability.

Uke can increase the challenge in small increments as *nage* learns and improves until the differences are spectacular indeed. Because a strong *nage* may easily resist the efforts of a physically weaker *uke* without resorting to anything faintly resembling the point of the exercise, partners should be of approximately equal physical strength or the stronger partner must take care to be particularly sensitive. Testing should never deteriorate into a wrestling match.

Ki testing is a teaching tool, not an attack (for which we would use Aikido techniques). A fierce rush of mass and motion is not dealt with only by extending *ki* unless there is no other option available. If, for example, a large oncoming mass has Mack emblazoned across the grill, we do not stand in the middle of the road extending *ki*; ideally, we extend *ki* — and step aside.

Does it really work? Try it and see.

Believe nothing, O monks, merely because you have been told it. Do not believe what your teacher tells you merely out of respect for the teacher.

But whatsoever, after due examination and analysis, you find to be kind, conducive to the good, the benefit, the welfare of all beings — that doctrine believe and cling to, and take it as your guide.

— Buddha

It's Really Just ...

Programming. *Ki* testing is sometimes dismissed by baffled onlookers as mere "programming" or some form of hypnosis. It is actually a means of revealing previous programming for what it is. Our minds are programmed with astonishing ease. Don't believe it?

1. Ask a friend or a group to repeat this series aloud: 10, 10, 10, 10, 10"
2. Ask this question: "What are aluminum cans made of?"
(Next question: "So what are *tin* cans made of?")

1. Ask a friend or a group to repeat aloud: "Pots, pots, pots, pots, pots"
2. Ask this question: "What do you do at a green light?"
3. Next question: "So what do you do at a *red* light?"

1. Ask: "What does F - O - L - K spell?"
2. Ask: "What is the word that means to feed a fire?"
3. Ask: "What is the word for the white part of an egg?"

You can program or be programmed to weaken yourself with negative self-defeating thoughts as easily as you just programmed someone else to think that aluminum cans are made of tin, that we stop at a green lights, or that white is yellow.

Whether you think you can or think you can't, you're right.

— Henry Ford

Supernatural Powers. The distinction between *natural* and *supernatural* is so often misused and misunderstood that it is useful to look at the words.

Super (from Latin) means “over” or “above” or “higher.” *Natural* (from Latin *natus*, past participle of *nasci*, to be born) means “as born” hence the kinds of skills and abilities which we expect most normal people to have or not to have.

In common usage, however,

Natural means: “We are familiar with this.”

Supernatural means:

- “We don’t believe this exists” or
- “We don’t understand this phenomenon” or
- “We don’t have a mechanism that explains how this observable but disturbing phenomenon might operate, therefore it must not be true.”

Properly used, the term “supernatural power” *should* refer to:

- Any ability above or beyond those that standard human beings appear to be “born” with.

Things appear “supernatural” when understanding is lacking or incomplete. But fact is fact, and power is power, whether we understand it or not.

We are “born” with far more than we sometimes realize. A newborn can put an amazingly strong grip on your finger despite being a tiny “weak” baby. Most beginners can perform basic *ki* exercises in seconds — it is only when they start thinking about it, doubting it, “knowing” that it is impossible, that their ability starts to waver and weaken to the point that they must relearn what they already knew how to do the day they walked in.

Truth 101. Truth is that which is true — whether you know it or not and whether you like it or not.

— Ben Swett

Faking. So if not “programming” or weird “supernatural powers” the results of testing must be fakery, pure and simple. Well, they can be. That is why you must always test the tester.

It is very easy to unconsciously (or consciously) change the force, direction, or other characteristic of the test to obtain a desired end. Having fallen into any one of these temptations, *uke* may have made his point, but has not performed a true *ki* test — he did not test what he claimed to be testing.

The flip side of this problem is the *nage* who “knows” he is supposed to “be weak” under particular conditions or “be strong” under others and so collapses or stands firm according to script. One partner tries to break the laws of physics while the other one pretends that he has. This makes for great theater but it is not *ki* testing.

It is also tempting for *nage* to counter the expected energy (“Ha-ha, you can’t get me!”) This is why every Aikido technique works about twice with beginners. As one of the worst all-time offenders in this category, I can say that this is a profound misunderstanding of the nature and purpose of *ki* testing. *Ki* testing is not a contest, but an evaluation in which *uke* has kindly consented to serve as a biofeedback detector of *nage*’s internal state.

To avoid any of these situations, test several times to experiment with the technique, the feeling, and observable results. Then repeat the tests with *nage* choosing the conditions — but without telling *uke*. Then verify results of *nage*’s internal choices with *uke*’s external observations. For example,

1. *Nage* thinks of a co-worker he dislikes. *Uke* test.
2. *Nage* thinks of an especially happy day. *Uke* test.
3. *Nage* chooses to think of one or the other. *Uke* test.
4. From the results *uke* tries to guess which topic or what combination of the two *nage* was thinking of.
5. *Nage* then confirms or does not confirm *uke*’s conclusion.

This approach removes all temptation for *uke* to load or skew the test in any way and provides essential reality testing for *nage*.

When preparing the first printing of this book, I assumed that it would be primarily of interest to Ki Society students with instructors to take them through the testing process. It turned out to have a far broader range of readers than I had anticipated and many took me to task for the rather sketchy testing instructions. One was Jan Beyen of Belgium who patiently kept at me for a better explanation and in the process helped develop a far better explanation of ki testing more effectively¹

Q. We tried ki tests once. Why didn't they work?

A. Perhaps because they were misunderstood.

Ki testing is a team sport but it is not a win/lose sport.

Many who try *ki* tests “fail” because *uke* saw himself as opponent and attacker, rather than as a teammate serving as a useful biofeedback device.

I once annoyed a partner by failing to fall over for *kokyu-dosa*; his solution was to punch me in the ribs. I did indeed fall over, but the point of *ki testing* is not whether *nage* can miraculously survive a punch or kick “by extending *ki*.” That is not a test, it is an *attack*. The point of *ki testing* is to find the points where *nage* is a little stronger, a little firmer, able to hold a little longer — and work up from there.

Suppose a friend is baking a cake and asks you to check to see if it is done. Test One for doneness in a cake is to gently tap the surface.

- Is it firm and resilient? Or,
- Is it still raw batter that gives way to the slightest touch?

Smashing the cake with a punch does nothing to help its progress. You have not “won” anything, and have been of no help at all to the friend (or the cake).

“An interesting idea,” said Jan, “but I don't cook so I really don't know quite what you mean ”

Or imagine that your partner has poured concrete footings for the house you are building together. You may test the footings gently with increasing pressure to see if they are strong, if they are firm, if they are set. Do you start to build your brick wall atop the footings before the concrete

¹ Excerpted from *Aikido Exercises for Teaching and Training* by C. M. Shifflett

has developed the necessary strength to bear the load? When the weight of the overlying brick causes the half-set concrete to fail, do you say "Ha-ha! I win! My bricks beat your footings!"

The point is to test, observe, and evaluate. It is not to overwhelm, smash, or 'win' by attacking any more than you "win" by smashing a half-baked pan of cake batter or a half-set form of concrete. It is a *cooperative* effort in feeling and sensing that partners can use to help each other improve

"I have never poured concrete," said Jan

"But I'm thinking of the first frost-weeks of winter, when the ponds start freezing over. As a kid I used to test the ice for strength (first throw a few small stones on the ice and if it breaks, it's nowhere near strong enough). When the ice seems fairly strong, you test by placing one foot on the ice and applying increasing pressure and feeling for movement. If you do feel movement, the ice is certainly not strong enough. If you slam down hard on the ice immediately you could get very wet if it isn't as strong as you thought

One thing that came to mind while I was looking for an example is that you also need to keep sensing subtle changes in the power that is coming towards you (or pulling away), no matter how strong it is. Some people seem to think that it's a choice between softly stroking or hard slamming (the "aiki-fruity" approach versus the "Butch-macho" approach).

When I go windsurfing (there has to be at least a force 5 wind) I have to sense the power in the sail and control it. Too little power and I'll sink, too much power and I get blown away (a catapult). On top of that there is the power of the waves that are trying to sweep away the board underneath my feet. So even with strong forces, you have to keep alert to the subtle changes in the power (and direction) to keep going. Otherwise it's a wipeout!

I guess that a ki test (on a particular exercise) would not be as easy to describe as a chemical-indicator test (think of a Breathalyzer test) where blue means STOP and green means GO (or whatever colors). But think of some kind of indicators as to what is OK and what isn't

When you test, regardless of what happens, how much effort did it require on your part to achieve that effect? There's a big difference between knocking nage over with a fingertip versus his being so strong, so stable, so softly and immovably centered that in trying to push him over, I only knock myself off balance

— Jan Beyen

Ki testing also has other applications.

Several members of our *dojo* volunteer weekly at the local juvenile detention center and teach *ki* classes. There, little short women demonstrate Unbendable Arm with the biggest, toughest kids there. When they cannot bend it, they are astounded, aghast!

“How do you do that?”

“How is that possible?”

“Do you lift weights, or what?”

They are teaching a different kind of strength. Whatever you call it, it is useful even for the children at the county detention center whose punches to the ribs or attacks to those whom they found annoying is no longer an option. Many are there because they tried that approach once too often. They’ve heard all the lectures. Just how well those have worked is made quite clear by their presence there.

In contrast, *ki* exercises offer up-close Real-Time proof that setting goals matters, what we focus on matters, what we think about matters, and even good posture matters — more than most of us will ever know.

The Basics

The following techniques — Unbendable Arm, sitting, rolling, standing, and turning — are the positions or exercises commonly subjected to *ki* testing.

Unbendable Arm*

In this classic exercise, *uke* tries to bend *nage*'s extended arm at the elbow while *nage* keeps the arm strong but relaxed, extending *ki* and attention beyond the arm. *Uke* tests gently at first with steadily increasing challenge as *nage* learns the feel. Once learned, *nage* will be able to maintain Unbendable Arm, exhibiting a strength beyond all apparent physical capacity.



A smaller or weaker *uke* may test *nage*'s Unbendable Arm by placing *nage*'s hand on his shoulder then placing his own hands on *nage*'s elbow joint and dropping weight underside. If there is a serious height difference, the taller partner may kneel or sit.

To help the feeling, *nage* may:

- Imagine a water pump in the abdomen that pumps water up through the torso, through the arm and out the fingers like water through a fire-hose.
- Imagine touching the wall on the opposite side of the room.
- Reach out to touch the finger of a third person.

Unbendable Arm illustrates the power of a goal outside the immediate battlefield (the elbow), and the weakness of tension and fixation.

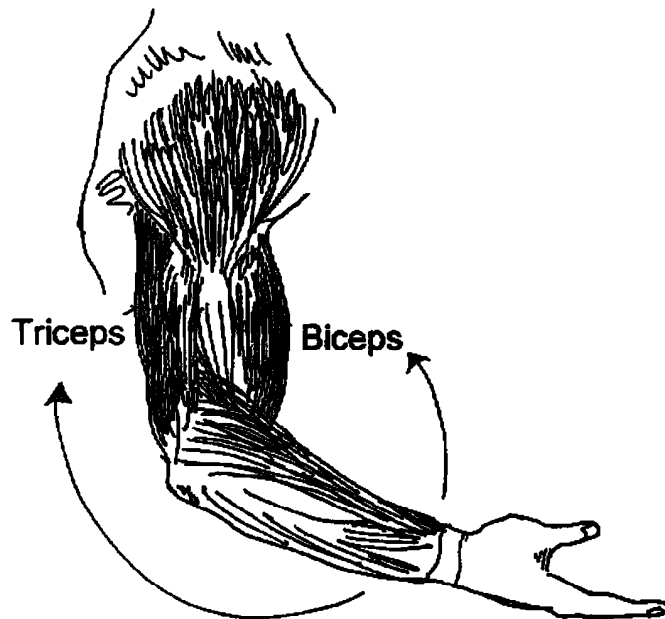


This exercise also illustrates the common misunderstanding of what strength really is and what it really is not.

Strength is not tension.

From a purely muscular (and simplified) standpoint, two antagonistic muscles are involved in Unbendable Arm: biceps brachii and triceps brachii. Biceps flexes (bends) the arm, while triceps extends (straightens) it. Keeping the arm extended while *uke* tries to bend it requires only triceps.

If biceps is tense and tight during this exercise, energy is being diverted to fighting triceps; you are fighting yourself. *Uke* or a third partner can help by checking the tension of the biceps muscle during the course of the exercise.



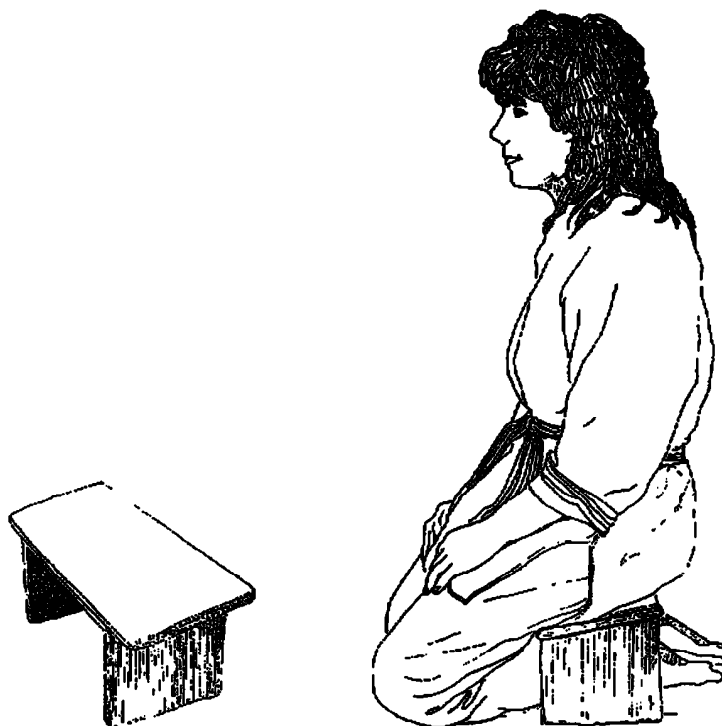
Sitting

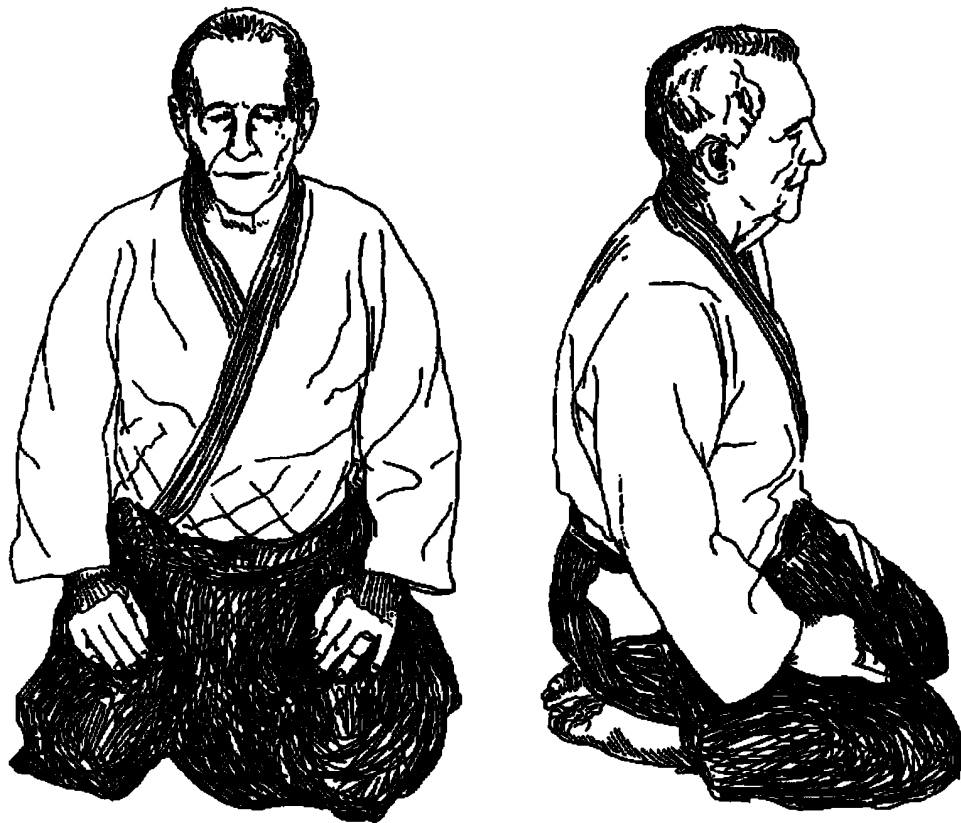
*Sitting Seiza**

Seiza ("correct-sitting") is the formal Japanese sitting or kneeling posture. Because it can be uncomfortable for beginners with tight leg muscles or for those with bad knees, students may sit cross-legged or on a *seiza* stool (a slant-top stool as shown) or on a chair. These positions tend not to be as stable, however, so *uke* must be especially sensitive while testing. From a kneeling position,

- Forehead and weight of head are over One-Point rather than the feet.
- Lower back curves in gently.
- Hands rest lightly on the thighs.
- Right big toe is over left big toe.
- Posture is softly erect.

When pressure is applied to the chest (with mind and body coordinated) *seiza* allows you to transfer the force to the tailbone which, being pushed into the mat, just makes you more stable.





Sitting Cross-Legged*

Sitting cross-legged (*anza*) may be more comfortable and familiar for the beginner than *seiza*. Shoulders are relaxed, weight slightly forward and hands rest on knees slightly forward of ankles. When weight is properly distributed it is difficult for a partner to lift the knee.

Cross-legged sitting is inherently less stable than *seiza* because the pelvis is more rounded. It flows very naturally, however, into a backwards roll.



Rolling*

"On the street," a favorite phrase in martial arts classes, usually means "in the movies" or "as seen on TV." Yes, we live in a violent world but studies have repeatedly shown that those who watch TV regularly have a severely warped view of the world and see it as a far more dangerous, violent place than it really is. They feel more helpless, hostile, and fearful of neighbors and strangers than those who deal with the real world and real people. But feelings of helplessness, hostility and fear, whatever their source, feed the cycle of fear and violence.

In our Fairfax County recreation classes, we regularly found that most students had signed up for self-defense "on the street." They are attracted to the county classes by the advertisement of a "non-violent martial art" and they enjoy themselves and each other. A new martial arts film, however, brings an influx of terrified and hostile students¹.

"Who has ever actually been threatened on the street?" we asked. Over three years and nearly 200 students, there were only three and all had dealt successfully with the problem.

"Who has tripped over a foot or curb anytime in the last month?" All hands went up. What then, is the most practical form of "self-defense" with the most immediate value?

Rolls are hands-free (note that the most common injuries "on the street" are from attempting to break a fall and breaking a wrist instead). Rolls are circular (Ki Society uses breakfalls only rarely); once the technique and dynamics of rolling have been mastered it doesn't really matter whether the "wheel" of your body rolls over a mat or over a parking lot.

The ability to fall and roll safely is one of the best self-defense techniques there is. But as usual in Aikido, there's more to it.

"We learn to roll," says George Simcox *Sensei*, "so that we can help someone else to learn Aikido."

1 "On the road," is a little different, see "Gridlock." See also "Radio/TV."

Rolling Backwards and Forwards*

This is a simple rolling back and forth (*koho-tento-undo*) like a rocking chair.

Sitting cross-legged with hands on thighs,

1. At count of One, roll backwards by rounding the lower back.
2. On count of Two, roll forward to original position.



The roll begins by rounding the lower back, not by flinging back the head. Throwing the head back puts the head in an unsafe position. Be a ball, not a brick.

To keep back rounded during the roll, think of touching knee to nose or touching your forehead to your belt. Merely tucking the chin does not curve the neck or back.

Hands remain on knees or thighs; they do not touch the mat.

Tempted to use hands? Clap them.

Rolling Backwards and Rising to a Kneel

Roll back as in previous exercise, but on coming forward,

1. Tuck the near leg as close to the pelvis as possible.
2. Bring other leg forward, bent at an angle of up to (but not greater than) ninety degrees. By pushing off with the tucked back leg (not with hands),
3. Rise into a kneeling position with back leg at an oblique angle to the body. (You can't roll with back leg perpendicular to the body).

From here, it is easy to drop back to another backward roll or rise to a standing position, *hanmi*. (See "Standing" on page 32.).



Full Back Rolls

A complete back roll continues the motion of the backward-forward roll. To do a complete back roll,

1. Start from the kneeling position, left foot forward and left knee up, right knee and leg on the mat.
2. Look at the left knee. You will be “throwing” this left knee over your left shoulder.
3. Look right, rock back and sit down past the mat leg while throwing your left leg over your left shoulder. As hips go overhead, continue the motion by pushing off with left arm.
4. As you complete the roll, bring your left leg forward to the original starting position.



Rolling Forward*

Forward rolls are more complex than back rolls — and painful if improperly done. For this reason, It is highly recommended that you get formal instruction from an Aikido *dojo*.

1. Kneel with left knee on mat, right knee up,
2. Lean forward placing right Unbendable Arm with back of right hand on mat. (Or join hands forming arms into a large circle).
3. Tuck and turn neck and head away from the rolling arm (left).
4. Curving back, neck and arm into a large circle, push off with toes, move hips forward rolling along right hand and arm and across back.
5. End in a kneel or standing (*hanmi*).

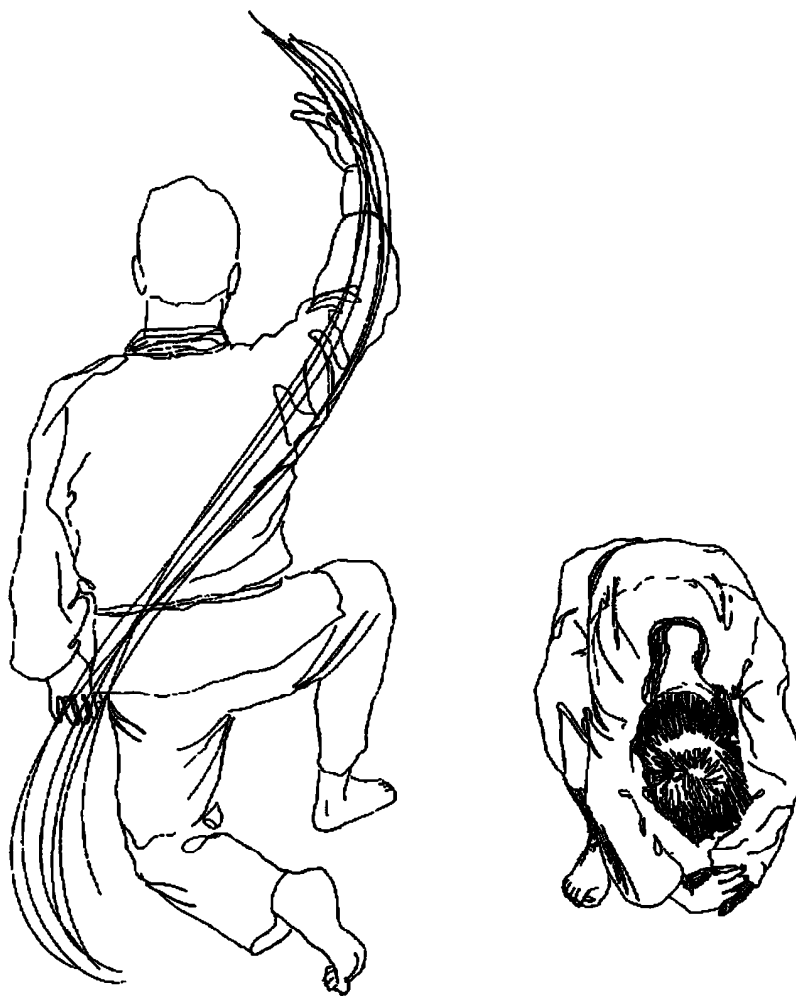


The Aikido roll (unlike the tumbling roll) does not flip over the nape of the neck, but proceeds slightly sideways down the arm, across the back to the hip. The head is tucked away from the rolling arm. This roll protects neck and spine so well that, properly done, it makes no difference whether you are rolling on a mat or on concrete.

A hard painful thump at the small of the back or hip means you are not tucking enough. Think of touching your knee to your nose, look at your belt, or try to tuck your forehead into your chest while rolling to maintain roundness.

New students often try rolls or other techniques two or three times and when all does not work perfectly, conclude that it's "too hard." Traditionally the beginning *jujutsu* student was given an assignment — one thousand rolls.

After doing one thousand rolls you will know how to roll. And you will no longer be a beginner.



Cross-Rolls*

Cross rolls (*zempo-kaiten waza*) are done as in normal forward rolls, but begin with left knee up and right arm on mat.

The Aikido test list (*hitori waza*) requires a series of three of these small rolls done in series while maintaining the same arm/leg relationships. Beginners who are hopelessly confused between right and left sometimes find it helpful to practice by tying a string around the big toe or by putting a sock on the “rolling” foot.

During rolling practice, students are sometimes challenged to see who can travel the length of the mat with the fewest large rolls, and who can do it with the most small rolls.

Hot tip: Cross-rolls are the answer to the “most rolls” problem.

Standing Rolls

Standing rolls are essentially the same as small rolls and end in *hanmi*.

Standing backward rolls are done in the same way as small backward rolls from the kneeling position except that you first place the top of the foot on the mat, drop to the kneeling position and roll from there.

Standing forward rolls are done in the same way as small forward rolls except that you must roll along a larger circle which extends out further from your beginning position. See it and get training in this before you try it.



Standing

The two basic standing positions are

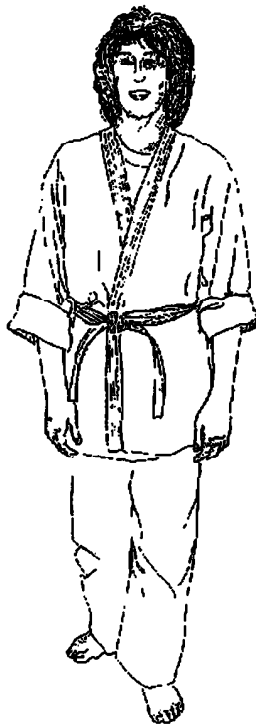
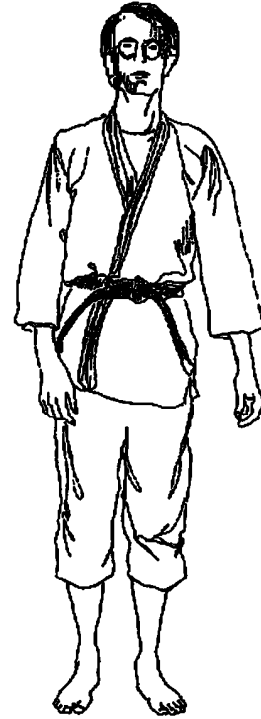
Shizentai is a 'natural' stance, feet parallel and shoulder-width apart.

Hanmi (meaning "half-body") from Japanese sword tradition, is a deceptively and astonishingly stable position. The distance between front and back foot is quite small. Stability comes from mind-body coordination and One-Point, not just the geometry of foot position.

Left hanmi means standing in this position with the *left* foot forward. *Right hanmi* means standing in this position with the *right* foot forward.

To rise into *hanmi* from a kneeling position,

1. Push off with legs only (no hands!)
2. With left foot forward, right foot back, rise up on toes.
3. Lower heels to floor without moving weight backwards.
4. Stand comfortably, with attention at One-Point.



Karate instructors constantly told me to *widen* my stance. Aikido instructors constantly urged me to *narrow* it.

Hanmi looks unthreatening, even casual and unconcerned, but offers dynamic stability, ease of motion — and you can dance to it.

This statement is not as frivolous as might appear. The classic karate stances are intended to provide a solid platform for outgoing punches and kicks, and a brace against incoming force. The Aikidoist simply moves out of the way, and can do so easily.

To test this, try a waltz around the room with one partner in *hanmi*, one in horse-stance (the karate stance shown at right).
Which partner can move more easily?



Turning (Tenkan*)

A *tenkan* is a "turning," a simple maneuver that is, in fact, one of the most powerful and devastating moves in Aikido. It is the Aikido version of "turning the other cheek." Balance and direction are extremely important and a common subject of *ki* testing.

In left *hanmi* (left foot and left hand forward)

1. *Uke* seizes *nage*'s left wrist with the right hand.
(Grasp gently to provide a pivot point and a point of reference rather than an exercise in breaking a death grip.)
2. *Nage* curls fingers and wrist back towards palm, then steps or slides forward with the left foot, pivoting 180 degrees to end up approximately shoulder to shoulder with *uke* or slightly behind. Draw the left foot back as necessary.

Left foot is still forward and right foot back (still in left *hanmi*).

Once the motion is learned, *nage* can practice alone by:

- Pivoting around his own extended hand (alternating right and left hands) or around a staff
- Turning in place or
- Turning every few steps while walking.

Turning the other cheek is a form of moral ju-jitsu.

— Rev. Gerald Stanley Lee

1862 - 1944

In 1982, I gleefully demonstrated a karate technique for breaking a hold to and on my "Old Swordmaster" Ben Swett. He demonstrated tenkan. I couldn't see it, didn't understand what he had just done or what he was talking about. All he had done was turn around. So? "I think," he said, "that you would enjoy Aikido." He was right.

— CMS



Testing

Now that you have some basics, you can use them for testing.

In general, *nage* (the partner being tested) stands comfortably or sits in *seiza*.

1. *Uke* (the partner who will provide the test) stands or sits in *seiza* perpendicular to *nage* (the partner who will take the test).
2. With the palm or fingers of the hand nearest *nage*'s chest, *uke* applies pressure to *nage*'s chest, perpendicular to *nage*'s chest, fingers parallel to the floor. Pressure is applied until *nage* begins to lose stability.
3. *Uke* observes the amount of effort required to disrupt stability.

This configuration is intended for beginning nages and for beginning ukes tempted to approach the exercise as a contest; less mechanical advantage makes it harder for *uke* to bowl over his partner. *Uke*'s fingers are parallel to the mat because the hand tends to follow the fingers. A test done with fingers directed upwards tends to go in that direction — a very difficult test.

Testing is divided into three levels . . .

Test One

This is the basic test for beginners. *Nage* tests with gentle or gradually increasing pressure.



Test Two

A more advanced test, applied in *nage's* sight with a hesitation.

1. *Uke* may bring a hand in rapidly as if to punch, stop . . .
2. Then proceed with the test Or . . .
3. *Uke* may place a hand a few inches away from *nage's* body and wait to see if *nage* withdraws or moves toward the hand..



Beginners commonly approach *ki* testing by leaning into the test in an attempt to increase mechanical advantage, especially if *uke* hesitates before testing (Test Two). This is the notorious "Magnetic Hand" — *uke* holds it out and *nage* is attracted to it like magic.

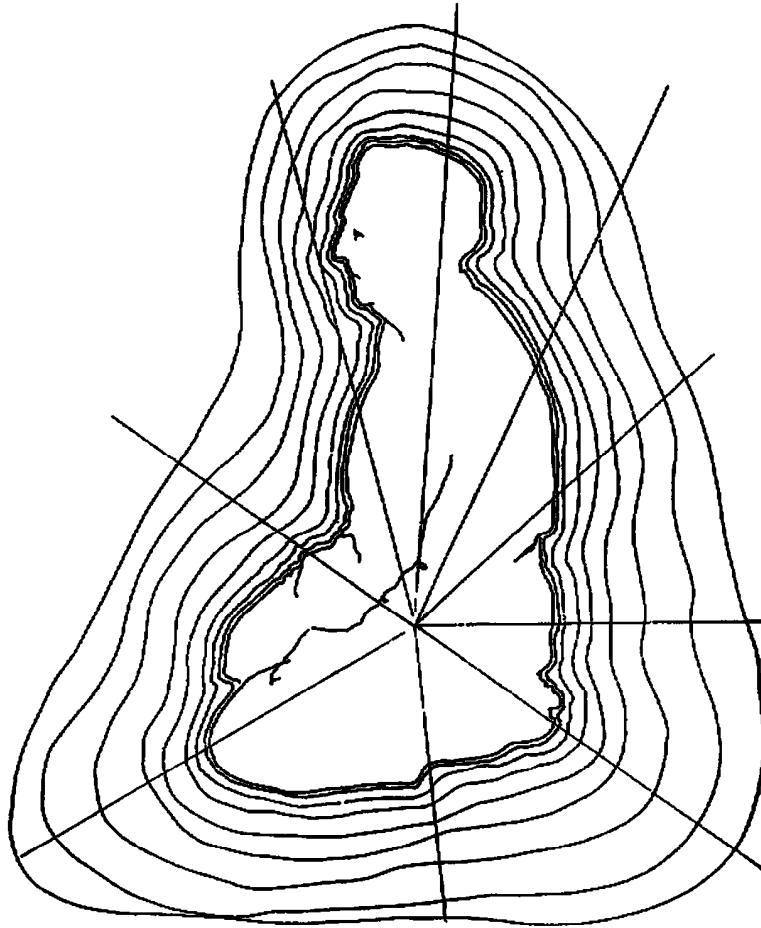
Unfortunately, if you rock forward, you will end up rocking back and lose stability. *Nage* cannot improve stability just by leaning forward because the test criterion of "perpendicular to *nage's* body" becomes "up," a more difficult test. Or, *nage* may be tested during a motion rather than after the motion has been completed

The cure for Magnetic Hand is for *uke* to immediately test from the rear and for *nage* to purposely do this a few times to see that it doesn't work.

In *seiza*, if losing stability, rather than a lean forward, try a bunny hop forward. This changes the environment but not the posture.

Test Three

Test Three is testing with *ki*. The idea is that *nage* extends *ki* out in all directions so that *uke*'s *ki* never even enters *nage*'s body.



Variations

The possibilities are endless, but include the following tests.

With *nage* in *seiza*:

- Pressing from front (perpendicular to) chest and back.
- Pressing shoulder from the side.
- Lifting *nage*'s knee.
- Lifting *nage*'s hand (not straight up from knee, but by pushing hand towards shoulder).



With *nage* standing,

- Pressing from front (chest), back and small of back.
- Pressing shoulder from the side.
- Attempting to lift *nage*'s leg from ankle.
- Unbendable Arm.

Keep One Point

CHAPTER 1 *Keep One Point*

One-Point is thought of as a point within the abdomen, several inches below the naval. The Chinese know it as the *tan-t'ien*, the "sea of *ch'i*." The Dugum Dani of New Guinea talk of the *edai egen*, or "seed of singing," as the source of life power at the center of the body. In English we talk of someone with spirit and fortitude as having "guts."

In Japanese, this point is known as the *hara*¹, the center of life and spiritual energy, a point-source of light and *ki*. In keeping with the Japanese tradition, the Aikidoist thinks of One-Point as the central point. We drop weight underside, to One-Point. We relax, focusing on One-Point. We extend *ki* from One-Point.

An attack and a reaction both have a rhythm and a beat. Since Aikido movement begins at the One-point and is detected by the One-Point, Aikido technique has a music, a rhythm of its own. Susan Chandler, *Sensei* whose workshops emphasize music and rhythm, thinks of One-Point as the "conductor" of the music of the body.

On the mat, we constantly test for One-Point. From the strictly physical standpoint, One-Point is the body's center of gravity, the center point of rotation. Good balance depends on good One-Point and everything else in physical technique depends on that. Focus on this point is called "having One-Point" or simply "One-Point." A shift or loss of One-Point can be as obvious as a fall or it can be extremely subtle requiring the assistance of *uke* to help detect its loss or misplacement.

In high-speed sports such as skiing or skating, a shift in One-Point at speeds up to 20 or 60 miles per hour can be more immediately obvious (wear protective gear!) than at "normal mat speeds." The tiniest shift produces remarkable results. Too far forward and your strokes will lose all power or you will go into a nose dive. Too far back and feet will fly

1. The *hara* is familiar in English (badly garbled) as "harry-karry," ritual suicide committed by a cut (*kin*) to the abdomen and the *hara*

up into a dangerous backward flip. Although it seems reasonable to lean forward while skating up a hill, it is always best to stay centered over One-Point. Eventually the skater discovers that power and speed come not by stroking with the feet but by shifting of the One-Point. One begins to feel less like a runner on wheels and more like a pendulum; One-Point is the center of rotation.

This dynamic stability is seen in several familiar children's toys. The Punching Doll, when struck, rotates around its One-Point to return to its original position.¹ In Japan, similar dolls (*Daruma*) symbolize good luck, or at least persistence — the ability to keep coming back again and again despite adversity.

The gyroscope is a highly stable spinning top. In engineering applications it provides a stable reference point for navigation, helping to stabilize and direct ships and planes. In Aikido, the One-Point offers the same stabilizing effect. It is thought of not only as the center of the body but of the universe. The idea is that since the universe is infinite, its center can be anywhere — so it may as well be at your One-Point — and for me, the center of the universe may as well be at mine. Whether physical or non-physical, this location can be placed and shifted through mind and attitude. Although we relax, drop weight underside and extend *ki*, we must always come back to One-Point.

Maxine Wright recounts a story told by a retired military officer who, as an inexperienced young man, was so fascinated by the sight of his troops marching to his command that he didn't think to call them back until they were well out of earshot. The situation was rescued by his lieutenant.

Regardless of the beautiful throw, the long soaring soccer kick, despite good fortune or adversity, keep One-Point.

¹ Application of the same principles to the statues of Easter Island resolved centuries of myth and mystery surrounding the Stone-Age transport of 10- to 40-ton stone giants over many miles of rough terrain. See Heyerdahl (1989) or Shifflett (2000).

The Goldfish Bowl

For smoother rolling,

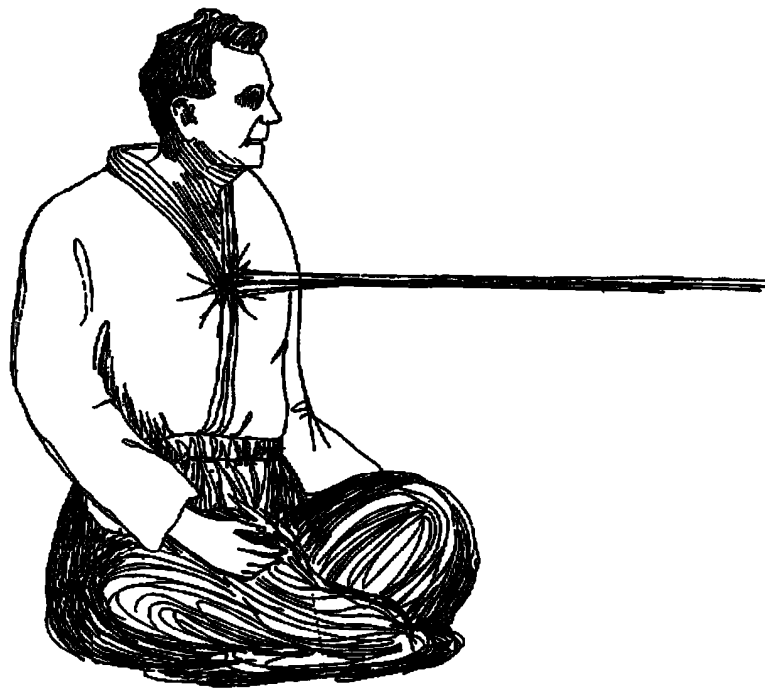
1. Imagine a goldfish bowl in your pelvis filled with water or a glowing, liquid, white light.
2. Roll and stand and move in such a way that you do not splash the water or disturb the fish.



Rubber Band

A visualization for stable rolling.

1. *Nage* rolls backward and forward (koho tento-undo).
2. *Uke* tests as *nage* returns to stable sitting position.
3. *Nage* imagines a rubber band stretching from One-Point or chest to the opposite wall.
4. *Uke* test.
 - Test One: *uke* waits until *nage* has settled into position.
 - Test Two: *uke* tests as *nage* is still coming up.



Student "But all I did was change what I was thinking."

Instructor: "Yes."

— Gregory Ford-Kohne

Moving One-Point

While sitting in *seiza*, cross-legged, or standing, *nage* places his mind in different positions:

- At the test point (*uke*'s hand).
- On top of the head.
- At the center of the earth.
- At One-Point.
- On the big toe.
- Across the room.

Uke test on request. Compare stability of different placements.

With *nage* in *seiza*, having established One-Point,

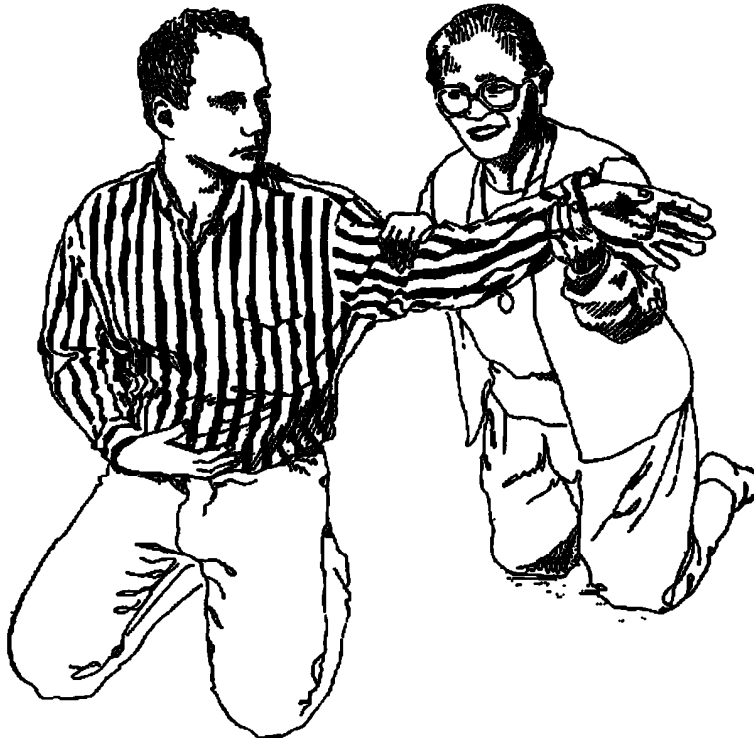
1. *Uke* runs a finger up *nage*'s spine like a zipper.
2. *Uke* test.

A classic means of disrupting stability is to tap *nage* on the head or tousle the hair. These are the *ki*-test equivalents of tennis players who stop play to ask you to show exactly where you put your thumb on the racket, or the losing volleyball team that loudly announces to the winning server that this serve is for Game Point. Practice maintaining One-Point in spite of these attempts by *uke* to move One-Point for you.

"Say One-Point"

After you have begun to master the concept and practice of locating and keeping One-Point,

1. *Nage* say "One-Point" while raising arm. *Uke* test.
2. *Nage* say "One-Point" then raise arm. *Uke* Test.



The challenge is to raise the arm while leaving mind at One-Point. An easy way to do this is to allow the arms to rise on their own as if floating in water. Try something many of us did as children.

1. Standing in a doorway, press the backs of both hands as hard as possible against the frame. Now,
2. Relax and step outside the frame.

The arms will rise — and be Unbendable as well.

Rotation*

An exercise in absorbing physical energy internally. In *seiza*,

1. *Uke* pushes *nage* on front of chest.
2. *Uke* pushes *nage*'s shoulder from the side.
3. *Uke* combines the two tests, pushing from the front then adding a gentle push from the side.



This is one of the most difficult of the basic *ki* tests. A helpful image is some version of this: sitting on a swing, a little red wagon, or a platform on casters welcoming a push because the harder the push *uke* gives, the better the ride. Wheee! — but the push is handled *internally* allowing the external body to remain still.

“Try” vs. “Do”

Test the following progression. *Nage* say each of these aloud.

1. I can't keep Unbendable Arm.
2. I will try to keep Unbendable Arm.
3. I will keep Unbendable Arm.
4. The arm is Unbendable.

Countless lectures and sermons have been preached on the negative effects of “can't” but note that “try” is little different as it contains the built-in possibility of failure. Look for other examples of effects by words that are far more than “just semantics.”¹ Words signify radically different things to different people. See Elgin, Suzette (1980).

George Simcox would tell of Mary Anne Brown who seemingly could not learn “Unbendable Arm.” Finally, instead of telling her to “put” the arm out there, George told her to “place” the arm. She stood strong. Changing one little word made all the difference.

“Squeezing” vs. “Fisting”

1. *Uke* offer a hand and asks *nage* to “squeeze” as hard as possible.
2. Without changing position, *uke* ask *nage* to “make a fist.”
3. *Uke* compare the forces generated by the two actions.

“Squeeze” is a somewhat indefinite command with many options but we all know what it means “to make a fist.”

1. From Gr *semantikos*, having significance, from *semainein*, to signify, from *sema*, a sign, and not “just ” any sign, but something of very real and distinct importance.

Changing Size

In a grab, you typically want to become smaller, enabling yourself to move with ease within *uke's* grasp, within your own skin. Combine this exercise with "Letting Go" on page 84.

Nage imagine:

1. Growing down below the mat and up to the ceiling. *Uke* test.
2. Expanding to fit the confines of the room, then beyond, becoming the size of the earth, extending to the ends of the universe. *Uke* test the effect of various images.

See Breathing and Meditation. See also the video "Powers of Ten" under Books, Movies, and Videos.

Cats have loose skin, as does the Rhodesian Ridgeback, a dog used for hunting lions. Both these animals are remarkably able to move within their skin should it become caught in claws.

Horses are notorious for launching into deep breathing exercises when being saddled against their will; no matter how tightly the cinch is pulled, breathing out loosens it.

Be at least as wise as a cat or dog or horse and don't get stuck in your clothes or your own skin¹.

¹ This freedom of movement is one reason that the traditional Judo *gi* has no ties.

Kokyu-Dosa*

Kokyu-dosa is not wrestling. It is an exercise in mind extension and control of One-Point. With *nage* and *uke* in *seiza*,

1. *Nage* extends arms, shoulder width apart. Palms are facing with fingers directed slightly up and elbows bent naturally.
2. *Uke* grasps *nage*'s wrists from the outside.
3. With Unbendable Arm and from One-Point, *nage* moves directly forward, unbalancing *uke*.
4. Hold down: Unbendable Arms with knife-edges of hands at *uke*'s shoulder and elbow.



Uke draws a circle to take you in. Draw yours larger. Uke drops One-Point. Drop yours lower. Ultimately, kokyu-dosa becomes an exercise in whose mind is larger, whose One-Point is lower.

Having trouble? Think not of pushing uke over, but of giving uke and everything behind him a hug.

If your practice deteriorates into a contest of weight and strength, please stop, center yourself and begin again, thinking not in terms of *what can I do against this opponent?* but *what can we do?*

What can we do? Well, we can go over there

Faced with the challenge of kokyu-dosa with an armless student, it was decided to have uke put his fists at nage's shoulders. To succeed, nage had to mentally use uke's arms as his own and move with confidence. It worked very well with both uke and nage learning a valuable lesson. Now we practice this often with all students, for it provides valuable feedback on the power of mental intention and physical results.

— George Simcox



The mistake is to begin to think that budo means to have an opponent or an enemy; someone you want to be stronger than, someone you want to throw down. In true budo there is no enemy or opponent.

— Morihei Ueshiba





Outwitted

*He drew a circle to keep me out,
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win;
We drew a circle that drew him in.*

— Edwin Markham

Variation

This exercise done repeatedly in succession without the pin, can be used as a pre-class warm-up or as a safe, supportive and low-stress way of helping a beginner learn to roll.

1. *Nage* throws *uke* who rolls to the side.
2. *Nage* assists *uke* in returning to the upright position.
3. *Nage* throws *uke* to the opposite side.
4. Repeat.

Techniques done kneeling (known as *suwari-waza*) teach you to move from your hips, to move hip with arm. They allow you to practice with small children, reduce the number of variables in the system, and they teach that trying to muscle through with arms alone just won't work. *Suwari-waza* translate easily to standing forms although standing forms do not translate easily to kneeling ones. This is why O-Sensei used to reprimand students for standing techniques.

Apparently standing techniques became standard in the U.S. because Americans were so unaccustomed to kneeling that the choice was "Standing Aikido" or "No Aikido." And so Americans begin with standing techniques and work up to kneeling ones thinking of them as "advanced" because of waiting for knees to get sufficiently flexible to do what would be a beginning technique in O-Sensei's *dojo*.

Meanwhile, we lose many beginners because of their fear of falling. With this approach, students aren't falling *down*, because they're already there. They're simply rolling *over*. How hard the mat is doesn't matter and even the biggest stiffest bodies (the ones at most risk for damage in falls) can't hurt themselves.

Also with this exercise there's someone there — not just giving advice from the sidelines — but holding and supporting, controlling the roll, keeping the new student safe. New students can work up to the feel of rounding and rolling gradually, be eased into the proper positions, protected from awkward ones. Experienced students can practice shifting weight and balance, following, and controlling.

All from *kokyu-dosa*.

Leaning vs. Falling

Falling is, of course, a large part of Aikido. The following exercises can be used not only as opportunities to practice balance and stability, but as useful training in the mechanics of *kuzushi* ("unbalancing") which precedes a fall.

Aikido falls occur for many reasons including momentum and rotation of joints and spine. But position of the body and One-Point relative to its support (the feet) is critical.

1. *Nage* stands in a natural (*shizentai*) stance; hands at sides, feet parallel and a little less than shoulder width apart forming a square or box.
2. *Uke* test by pressing gently on chest or shoulder. Notice that as long as One-Point is over the box, *nage* is on balance. When One-Point drifts outside of the box (by just a few degrees), *nage* is now in the process of falling, and must either step or contort posture to recover.

Variation

There is also a transition area that surrounds the perimeter of the square.

1. Have the student get a feel for the areas:
 - inside the square,
 - outside the square, and
 - where the transitions occur.
2. Repeat for an angled stance (*hanmi*) where the lines of balance/off-balance will trace a triangle.

I don't throw anyone. I remove their option to stand up.

— Dennis Hooker

Leaning Backward*

An exercise in controlled relaxation and One-Point.

1. *Nage* leans back against *uke* but keeps One-Point.

2. *Uke* moves away suddenly.

If *nage* has kept One-Point, stability will be maintained.

If not, *nage* will fall.



Variation

- Notice the points and positions of *instability* that will result in an Aikido “throw” or fall.
- To a *lean*, add *rotation*.

One reason that Aikido may seem so unbelievable and even "fake" to someone just watching it is that we don't really understand how important balance is in everyday life.

Ask a person on the street to show you "balance" and they will lift a foot and extend their arms out like a tightrope walker. It isn't something you think of doing while walking, standing, or running.

I started Aikido shortly after I moved to Norway after living in in California. I had forgotten about snow. . . and ice. Good Aikido is like having a raygun that can turn all the land under the attacker to ice, while you stand on solid ground.

On ice the least little thing can send you out of control. Resistance is futile — and only works against you. A big strong guy leans just a little too far, and a little child can topple him.

— James Acker

Leaning Forward*

Another version of relaxing on a support while keeping One-Point.

Note that arms are not kept artificially folded; they drop, relaxed, with *uke*, but body remains stable.

1. *Nage* leans forward over *uke*.
2. *Uke* drops away suddenly.

If *nage* has kept One-Point, stability will be maintained.

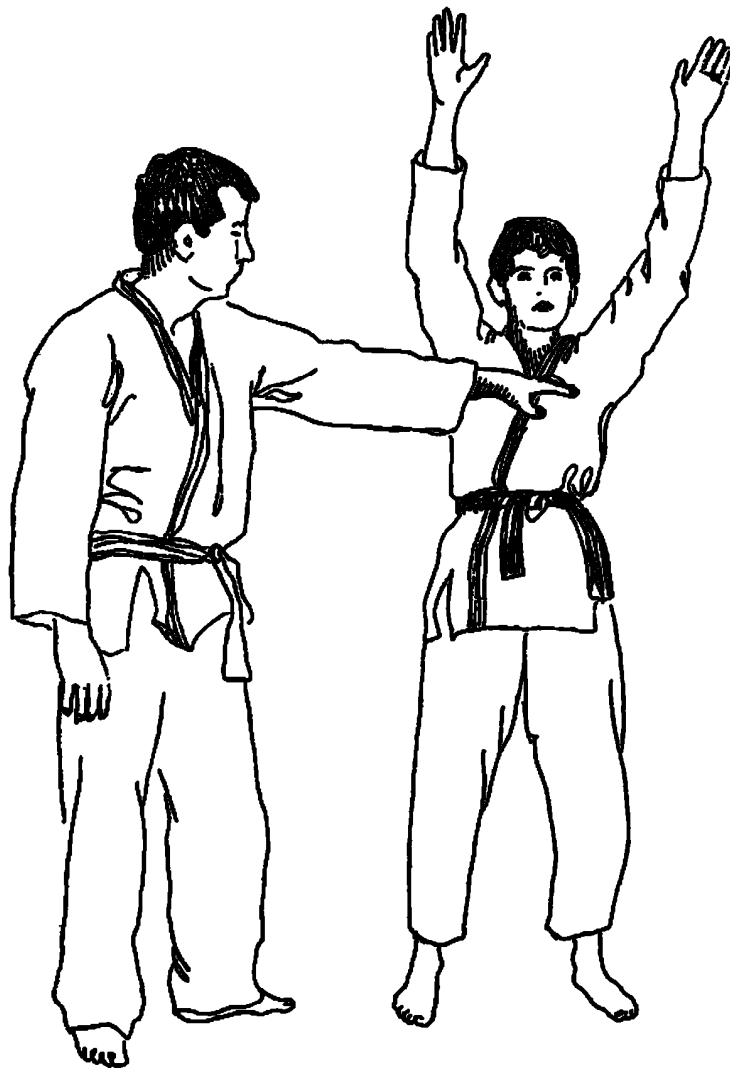
If not, *nage* will fall.



Raising Arms*

This exercise can be thought of as a physical version of goal setting.

1. *Nage* bends backward with arms raised overhead but keeping One-Point.
2. *Uke* test by pressing back towards (perpendicular to) chest



Notice that if arms are strongly extended, nage will be stable.

If arms are extended weakly, hesitantly, or stiffly, stability will be lost.

One-Point With Attitude

As we have seen, attitude affects One-Point. But One-Point also affects our attitude, or others' perception of it.

As demonstrated by Susan Chandler *Sensei*,

1. *Nage* purposely takes a position:
 - Forward of One-Point,
 - Over One-Point,
 - Back of One-Point.
2. In each of these positions, *nage* recites a passage of poetry or the most matter-of-fact statement, striving for uniformity of breath and intonation.
3. *Uke* observe:
 - How the voice changes, despite *nage*'s best efforts at uniformity or subterfuge.
 - The emotion conveyed or impact of the statement spoken in each of the three positions.
 - With eyes closed, degree of success at guessing which position (forward of One-Point, over One-Point, or back of One-Point) *nage* is in at the moment.

Floating Below

Because these exercises are done with the mind, you can do anything, unlimited by the constraints of the physical world.

For example, if the instructor tells you to “float,” why limit yourself to floating above the mat?

1. **Imagine . . .**

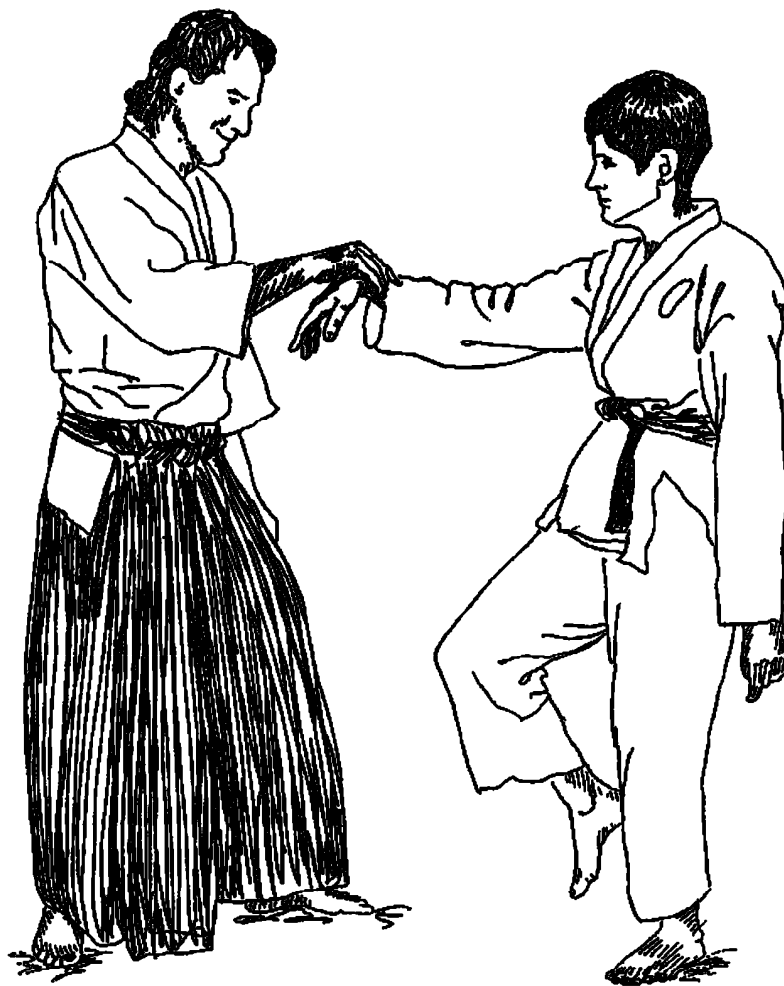
- Floating under the mat or underground with just your eyes peeking up above the mat or above the grass.
- Sitting at the bottom of a quarry, at the bottom of the sea, at the center of the earth.
- Floating in a bubble in Outer Space where there is no up or down.
- Being a leaf floating downstream with the current.

2. Uke test at *nage*’s request.

Wrist Push*

This exercise appears on the *ki* test list as "Thrusting out one hand, then being pushed by the wrist" (with *nage* standing in *hanmi*) and its variation, "Thrusting out one hand and raising one leg."

Both are an exercise in transferring energy to the One-Point. Doing so increases stability and flexibility at the same time.



Freedom From Fear

This is a classic yoga exercise. Watch for this pose in Eastern art and sculpture.

1. *Nage* stands with palms forward, the fingers of the left hand pointing up, fingers of the right hand pointing down.
2. *Uke* tests to the chest and back. Are the results the same or different:
 - For right- and left-handed partners?
 - When the hand positions are reversed?



The Hum Test

In *seiza*,

1. *Nage* hum a note. *Uke* test.
2. *Nage* focus on the sound of a resonant bell. *Uke* test.

This is the auditory version of *tekubi-shindo undo* ("wrist shaking exercise"). See the last step in the Three-Minute Ki Exercise for Health (Appendix B).



Relax Completely

CHAPTER 2 *Relax Completely*

Relaxation does not mean limpness or collapse. It means not expending energy unnecessarily, not diverting your energy to fighting yourself. A common example is that of a cat napping in a sunbeam. Her body is completely relaxed, yet if startled, she will be across the room in a flash.

Rigidity is not strength. If you try to make Unbendable Arm by making your arm rigid, you are actually hampering yourself and helping the opponent. Your stiff muscles make your arm harder for you to move, while making a wonderful lever for your opponent to move you.

A fundamental concept of Aikido is that just because an attacker controls your hand, he does not control the rest of you. The assumption in this equation is relaxation. When you are relaxed, the rest of you is free to move. When you are stiff and tense — the hand rigidly connected to a rigid arm, a tight body, tense legs, and a fixated mind — he does control the rest of you. It is the difference between pushing a broomstick across the floor and trying to push a rope across the floor.

Purely physical strength is limited by the physical body. There will always be someone bigger and stronger, if not now, then tomorrow or 20 years from now. O-Sensei was renowned for his strength and muscular build in his youth. By old age, when purely muscular strength may begin to fail, he had evolved beyond mere muscle and bone into other forms of strength.

Aikido allows you to use *uke's* strength, instead of or in addition to your own, giving you a tremendous advantage over a larger, stronger opponent provided you avoid a weight and strength contest. Allowing the situation to deteriorate into a weight and strength contest throws away the advantage. In order to use *uke's* strength and energy, you must stay with it, align with it, go in the direction that it is going. Skillful blending with the attack is a form of camouflage, a weapon in and of itself.

As an example, suppose your Fairy Godmother has presented you with the Magic Cloak of Invisibility for a trip through the ogre's castle or the

dragon's lair. What is the correct use of this weapon? It is to move softly and gently, leaving no trace of your passing.

To reveal your presence by stomping about, kicking over chairs, stopping to arm wrestle or punch out everyone you meet would be a waste of a powerful tool. By blending into the attacker's own power and direction you disappear; *uke* will feel only himself — not you — and be unable to counter.

Acquiring this softness and sensitivity is one of the difficulties of Aikido. It is terribly tempting to attack *uke* with sheer muscle power if that is available to you; it is extremely difficult for the physically strong person to abandon what has always worked on weaker persons in favor of softness to all comers.

One of the strongest men I have ever known became thoroughly exasperated with my repeated attempts to muscle my way through a technique. "Time out!" he roared, dropped to the mat and challenged me to an arm wrestling match. *Wham!* He won. No contest. "Aha!" he said. "I am stronger than you. Just checking." Point taken.

Paradoxically, the more you feel that you have done nothing, the more likely it is that you have done the technique correctly. There is an enormous difference between attacking a technique and allowing a technique to happen and it is a difficult lesson to learn. One way out is to make softness itself a challenge. How softly and gently can you do a given technique? It is not necessary to slam and force the opponent.

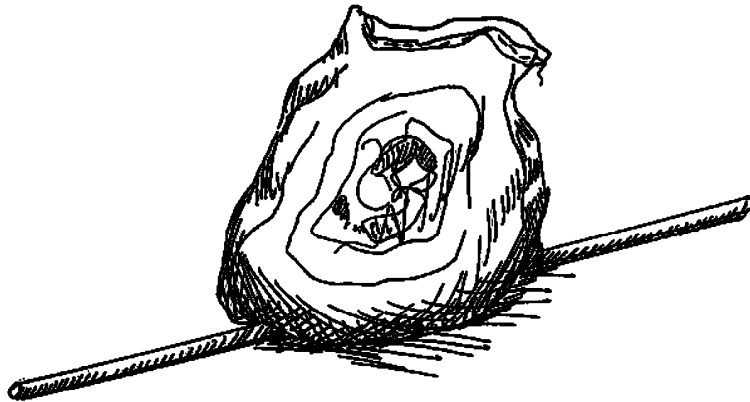
A friend who saw Ueshiba doing a demonstration was impressed that this tiny, elderly man was laying four or five big Air Force martial arts instructors down on the mat. What was most impressive was *how* he was doing it: "He almost caressed them down."

It is this softness and gentleness, this relaxation, that helps make Aikido so devastating, so irresistible, so effective.

Relaxation and Rigidity

Tense arms or bodies make wonderful levers or targets for opponents.
Relaxed ones do not.

1. Test the difference between lifting:
 - A 50-pound bag of rice and
 - A 50-pound rod or weight bar.
 2. Repeat with relaxed body and a purposely rigid body.
- See also "Unliftable Body*" on page 96.



Tense attitudes are also detrimental to those who hold them and their situations in life. Dan Frank of the Maryland Ki Society tells of a policeman with a long history of persons resisting arrest. He studied Aikido in order to learn to apply effective wrist locks, but first had to learn how to relax and be centered. He did so — only to discover that he no longer needed wrist locks and control techniques. Because he was approaching situations relaxed, rather than with a belligerent mind or the expectation of conflict, he had no more problems with persons resisting arrest.

Relaxed Mind

1. Find and test someone engrossed in a conversation, a television show, a board game, or a book — and test.
2. Compare results with someone who is not distracted; who has been warned and is therefore apprehensive about being "tested."

A classic response in *ki* class is known as the "Hakama Effect," wherein a student does fine until a big, black *hakama* (the "skirt" worn by advanced students) looms before him. The student immediately thinks "Oh no! A test!" — and focusing on that, loses all stability.

For raw beginners, learning to roll safely is rarely the favorite exercise, especially if the student is focused on discomfort, fear, or embarrassment. A standard way around this, especially in children's classes, is Rolling Tag, played like any other game of tag except that players move only by rolling. It is astonishing how quickly rolls improve.

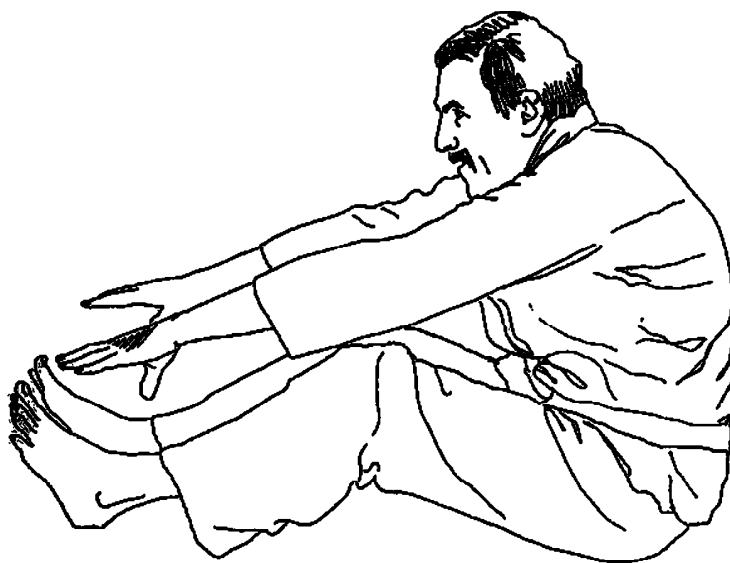
"No Pain, No Gain"

In many traditional dojos, stretching is done in pairs who may "help" each other by standing on knees or back — then wonder why the former partner doesn't return.

Ki classes encourage limbering, but not forced stretching. Here's why.

In pairs, doing toe-touching or other stretching exercises,

1. *Nage* forces a stretch while thinking of the old saw "no pain, no gain."
Uke test.
2. *Nage* moves forward just until the muscle reaches its comfortable limit.
Uke test.



Arm Swinging*

In class, this exercise (*ude-furi undo*) is usually continuous with the Spinning Exercise (*ude-furi choyaku undo*).

Nage stands with feet shoulder-width apart, with head, eyes, and chest straight ahead. *Uke* calls the count.

1. On "One," swing arms to the left, wrapping around body.
2. On "Two," swing arms to the right, wrapping around body.

The count is 1-2, 1-2, 1-2, 1-2 . . . until *uke* signals the end of the series by calling a 3 - 4.

3. On "Three," swing arms to left as on "One."
4. On "Four," swing arms right as you step forward with left foot.

Uke may test for stability at this point, or *nage* may continue into the Spinning Exercise (*Ude-furi Choyaku Undo*).



Spinning*

An exercise (*ude-furi choyaku undo*) to develop balance, One-Point, and relaxation. Remember spinning like a top when you were a child? Movement begins from the One-Point, although rapid changes in direction can start from the little finger which acts like a small starter motor.

Arms are not held out, they spin out due to centrifugal force; they should be so relaxed that you can feel tingling in the fingers.

Extend *ki*, that is, have a goal. Pick a point on two walls to serve as reference points, otherwise you will become dizzy and disoriented.

From Step 4 of the Arm Swinging Exercise, with arms wrapped to right side of body and left foot forward,

1. On "One," rotate One-Point 180 degrees. Arms spin out rising to shoulder height, then wrapping to left side of body.
2. On "Two," reverse direction returning to original position with arms wrapped to right side of body.

The count is 1-2, 1-2, 1-2, 1-2 . . . until *uke* signals the end of the series by calling a 3 - 4.



Bowing*

From *seiza*,

1. *Nage* bows forward from the One-Point by sliding hands from the thighs to the mat to form a triangle. Forehead is a few inches above the hands, parallel to the floor. Eyes follow direction of head.
2. *Nage* holds this position for three seconds, then rises.
3. *Uke* tests by:
 - Pushing *nage* from side while bowing down and while coming up.
 - Standing behind, holding *nage*'s shoulders to prevent bow.



In karate classes, opponents keep eyes warily on each other during the bow. In Aikido classes, partners lower the eyes with the head in an act of mutual respect and trust. Here's why.

Reigi is often translated as "courtesy" or "etiquette" but the meaning is much richer. Rei . . . translates as "Holy Spirit"; gi is "manifestation." Bowing to another is the recognition of this responsibility and of the spirit of [God] within each person.

— Mitsugi Saotome

In a more martial version of the bow, the left hand is placed on the mat, followed by the right (sword hand). The Virginia Ki Society specifically uses the version described here (also used in Zen Buddhism).

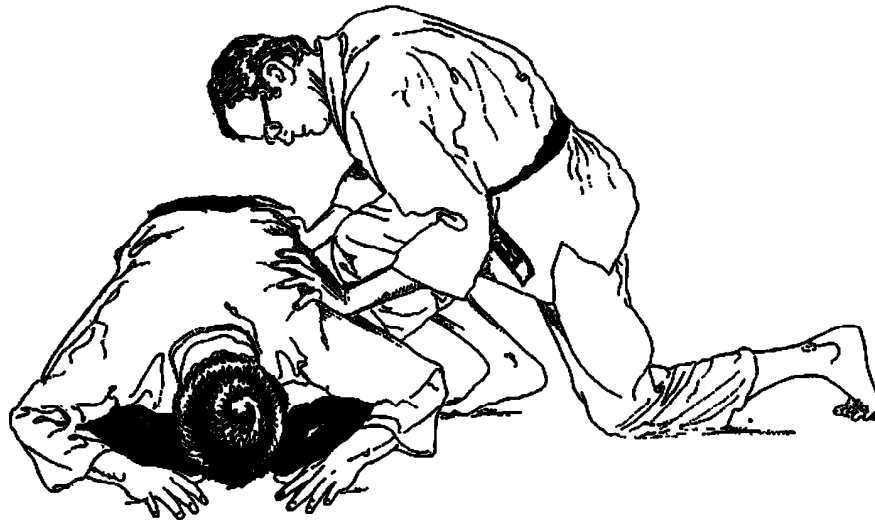
— George Simcox

Variation

Uke tests from the side by attempting to push *nage* across the mat. A *nage* adept at controlling relaxation, rigidity, and balance can put on quite a show:

1. Sliding sideways across the mat, then
2. Relaxing and dropping weight underside.

For *uke*, the feeling is like hitting a soft, thick, and utterly unmovable rubber wall.



The Nelsons

In pairs, with *uke* standing behind *nage* of approximately equal height,
1. *Uke* slips arms under *nage*'s arms, then up, clasping hands behind *nage*'s neck to bend neck and body forward.

This is the wrestling hold known as the Full Nelson. (One hand holding behind the neck is a Half Nelson).



2. *Nage* tenses and stiffens. Observe results.
3. *Nage* relaxes, drops One-Point, arms, and shoulders. Observe results.
(Compare "Unliftable Body*" on page 96.)
4. *Nage* stays relaxed throughout.

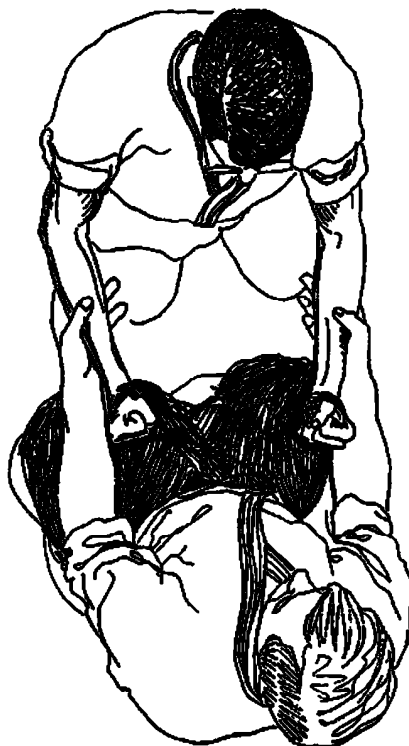
If some guy wants to come out of a dark alley and grab you around the neck, that is his problem.

If you are so frightened and paralyzed that you are unable to act, that is your problem.

—George Simcox

Strong and Soft

1. *Nage* presents a fist or fists tightly balled with muscles "strongly" tensed. *Uke* takes *nage*'s wrist and provides motion such as:
 - Pushing and pulling,
 - Turning wrists in and out,
 - Extending down and pulling up.
2. *Uke* asks *nage* to identify the motion then have *nage* relax arm.



While tense, *nage* will feel only the strongest motions. If for example, *uke* is rotating *nage*'s wrists in, *nage* may not have a clue as to what is happening. On relaxing, however, the wrists will actually turn in, a motion that was there all along but imperceptible to rigid muscles.

Uke should make these motions increasingly subtle as *nage* improves in the ability to feel them while relaxed. This exercise can flow into "Sticky Hands" on page 80.

As we progress we learn to be softer. It is the young karate students who do the smashing blocks. The Old Master has learned to do just enough to deflect a blow, to brush it softly aside. In Aikido, softness is taught from the beginning.

— D. C. Buchanan

Sticky Hands

An exercise in feeling. Move slowly at first and avoid shoving or yanking contests. Speed is not the real purpose, nor is "touching the nose." As in most Aikido techniques, contact with *uke* is done not to grab, crush, or block but *to feel or sense position*.

In pairs, *uke* and *nage* touch hands or fingers, as:

1. *Uke* moves hands slowly and smoothly about.
2. *Nage* follows *uke*'s motions without breaking contact, accepting a push, following a pull. As skill develops,
 - *Uke* tries to touch *nage* gently on the nose or chest.
 - With hands apart, *nage*, with eyes closed, follows *uke*'s movements by sensing the heat of *uke*'s hands.



Many people with poor eyesight have ended up in Aikido rather than other martial arts because if all you can see is a blur you must rely on feeling. Those with good eyes can overcome their handicap of good vision by closing eyes or practicing in a dimly lit room.

The Linebacker Versus the Water Drop

In this exercise and "Stiff Fist" on page 82, relaxing allows *nage* to feel and follow the little areas of weakness or instability, like a tiny drop of water trickling through a small hole, along any available channel, in a way that a brick or a boulder could never do.

In pairs, with *uke* in a braced standing position,

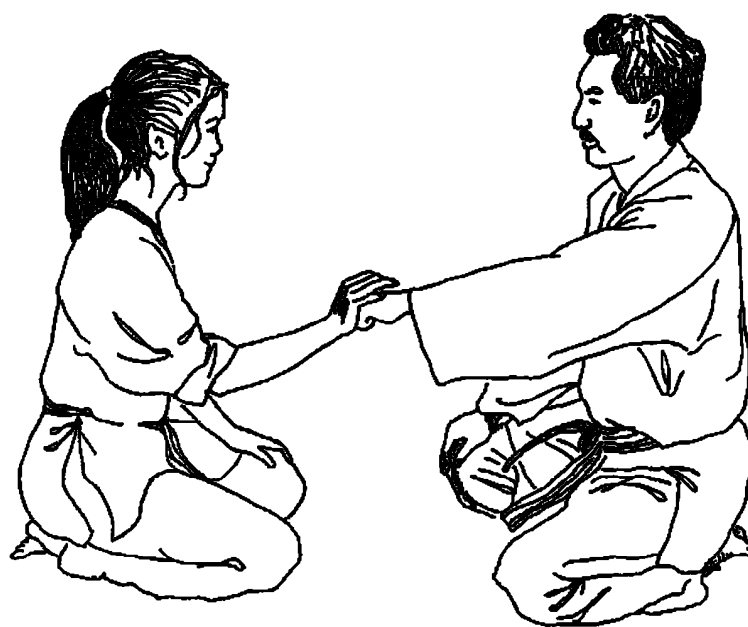
1. *Nage* pushes directly into *uke* with strength. *Uke* will probably be very stable.
2. *Nage* pushes softly into *uke*. This time *nage* should be able to feel the points of weakness and move with them.
3. Repeat this exercise:
 - In the karate wide-stance position.
 - In *hanmi*.
 - On one foot.



Stiff Fist

Uke extends a strong stiff arm with a stiff fist.

1. *Nage* squeezing firmly, tries to move it in different directions.
2. *Nage* surrounds it lightly and moves it softly.



What Doesn't He Have?

In pairs or in groups of three,

1. *Uke* **seizes** *nage's* wrist. Leaving wrist in place,
2. *Nage* **takes** inventory of what *uke* does not control.

For example, the *uke* who seizes *nage's* shoulder does not control *nage's* other shoulder.

The *uke* who seizes *nage's* hand does not control *nage's* hips, foot, other hand, or shoulders, unless of course, *nage* stiffens or gets stuck on his own skin, clothing, or perceptions.

Compare with "Letting Go" (page 84) an exercise in which you will consider that *uke* does not control your elbow.

During a drug enforcement training program, one participant, a former Golden Gloves champion, had a pistol in one hand. His instructor pinned that hand to the wall. At any point, this champion boxer could have pounded him with his free hand, but did not. Because all his attention was concentrated on trying to make that pistol work, his mind was closed to all the other tools and options at his command.

— George Simcox

Letting Go

Every child is told the story of the Monkey Trap, a box with a hole and nuts or fruit inside. A monkey can reach through the hole to the goodies inside, but cannot withdraw the full, clenched fist. We often understand this tale as a parable or laugh at the foolishness of these "lower" creatures when, in fact, it describes a standard human response. Here *uke's* fingers form the opening and *nage's* fist is a fist, whether it holds nuts — or thin air.

1. *Uke* holds *nage's* wrist in a firm grasp. *Nage* attempts to pull away but will be stopped by his own fist.
2. *Nage* relaxes, imagines hand shrinking smaller and smaller, then, extending *ki* from fingers and elbow, pulls away.
3. *Uke* and *nage* compare effort and success of pulling away.

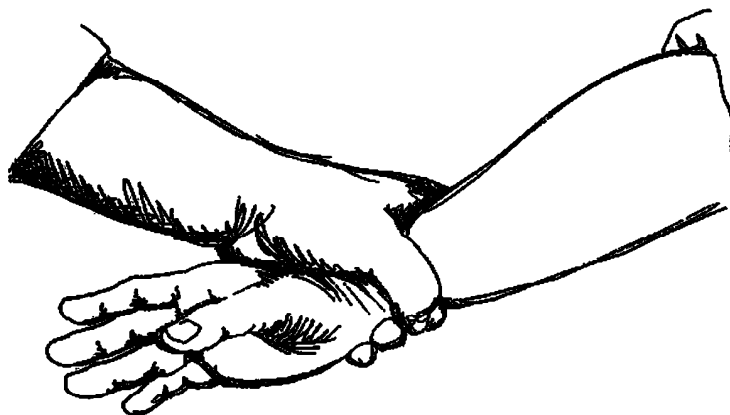


Often when we think we are pulling away we aren't — we're actually holding on. In the first case, the two are held tightly together by *nage's* own rigid fist which gives *uke* something to hold on to. In the second case, *uke* simply goes away. Completely.

Please note that this is a *ki* exercise, not an exercise in "breaking a hold." We rarely break holds or grabs — because in Aikido a hold is actually an advantage.

Keeping the hold means *uke* has just committed (tied up) up at least one of his weapons. The hold tells *nage* exactly where *uke* is, and presents *nage* with a gift of energy while limiting *uke's* options.

Breaking the hold means starting over at the point where *uke* has not yet committed to any particular attack and so has all options open. *Nage* no longer know where *uke* is, and has no physical energy or inertia to play with.



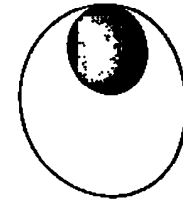
Yin-Yang, In-Yo

The *yin-yang* symbol comes from Chinese philosophy and represents the opposing forces of the universe.

Yang is thought of as male, positive, light, dry, hard, powerful and strong.

Yin is thought of as female, negative, dark, wet, soft, and gentle.

Humans being human tend to assign value judgements to these characteristics (“positive/negative”) although they are merely extremes of a continuum. Hence the unifying circle is divided by a curved line suggesting that the characteristics of each opposite are invariably contained within the other.



It is a beautiful illustration of the relationship strength and softness, between *nage* and *uke*.

Many people begin martial arts with the idea of forcing and slamming a partner to the mat only to find that while power and strength has its uses, it works best combined with softness and fluidity.

Think of the tiny delicate tendril, the root hair that splits the hardest rock. Think of developing the strength and endurance to keep doing that.

The Japanese¹ version of the *yin-yang* is the *in-yo* symbol, a small dark circle (*in*, dark) within a larger lighter one (*yo*, light). Wheels within wheels.

It is a beautiful illustration of the mechanics of Aikido.

Look for the *in-yo* symbol in the “The Goldfish Bowl” on page 45, throughout Aikido movements — and elsewhere.

1. The *in-yo* is used by many Japanese karate organizations which claim descent from two Okinawan karate schools: the *Shorin*, which practised light, yielding, flexible movements; and the *Shorei*, which emphasized strength and power.

Keep Weight Underside

CHAPTER 3

Keep Weight Underside

Aikido does not fight the force of gravity — it takes advantage of it. “Weight underside” is the most efficient approach to a motion as it aligns with the forces of nature, the forces of the universe.

Those forces are more powerful than we usually realize. Drop your hand and gravity alone will move it towards the center of the earth at the rate of 32 feet per second squared. The expression:

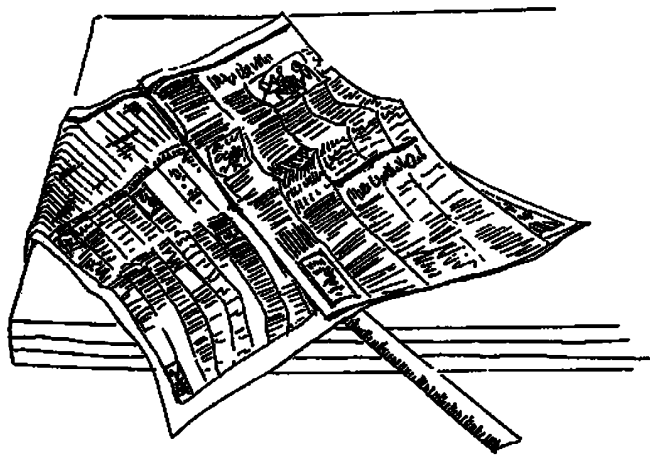
$$F = ma$$

(Force = mass X acceleration due to gravity)

is the fundamental law of physics behind the ancient observation that:

The bigger they are, the harder they fall.

In addition, there is the weight of miles of air above us, pressing us down to earth. A full-sized sheet of newspaper spread out flat on a table top has 10,000 pounds of air pressing on its surface.



Don't believe it? Slide a wooden yardstick under a sheet of newspaper; strike down sharply on the protruding end of the yardstick and see what happens. As *nage*, when causing *uke* to fall, “gravity is your friend.”

Perhaps still more surprising is that as *nage* you want to fall too — because rather than adjusting posture, lifting foot, and stepping, the fastest, most efficient motion from Point A to Point B is to *fall* there.

Most Aikido techniques will not work with the shoulders up and elbows held out to the side. In attempting a throw with Weight Uppside *uke* may not fall *down* — because you're actually holding him *up*. But why waste energy holding shoulders and elbows against the force of gravity and weight of air? Align with those forces; drop them.

"Dropping weight underside" is allowing your skeleton to support you — that's what it's for — rather than requiring muscles to do things that need not be done anyway.

Under stress, we tend to hunch our bodies as if protecting ourselves against an attacker. Shoulders go up and elbows go out, perhaps a primeval device to look bigger than we are. In reality, a hunched body is no protection at all. Relax. Check periodically for signs of tension. Is your face tight? Relax your eyelids. Are your shoulders hunched while driving or working at your desk? Drop them¹.

We may also be disturbed by hunched attitudes — defense mechanisms, often brilliant survival techniques — that served their purpose years ago but are no longer useful, may actually be harmful, and so are no protection either. "He's very defensive," said an observant friend of a fiercely tough-guy acquaintance, "and so he is very easily manipulated."

For me, another version of Weight Underside came to light with an injury. As there always seems to be more to do than can possibly be done, I tend to flit from one crisis to another, lopping the heads off the dandelions of life rather than reaching down to the root.

When flitting meant hobbling painfully about on a severely sprained ankle or on crutches, I was astonished to find that I accomplished more. I had to stay in one place, finish what I had begun, and follow the chore through to the end instead of making do with "a lick and a promise." To my surprise, this did not mean lost time but a product: a series of completed tasks in place of divided attention, wasted energies, and an endless stream of unfinished work and emotional IOUs.

1. After the Eight-Direction Exercise, George Simcox *Sensei* would often roar "Great!! Now everybody drop your shoulders by two inches!"

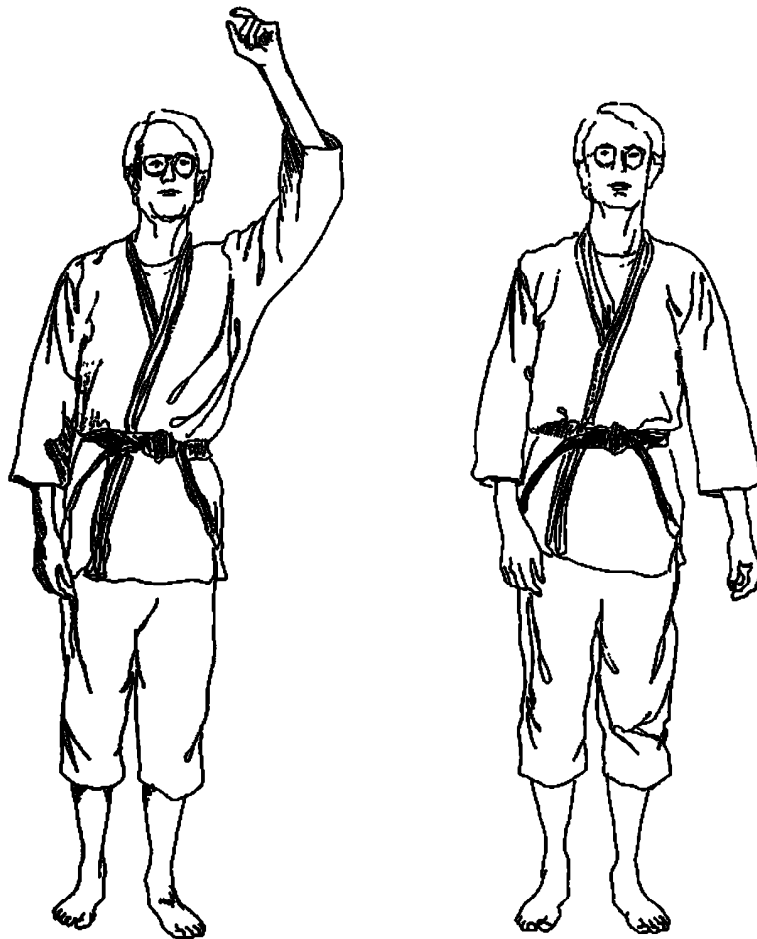
Arm Dropping*

This seemingly simple exercise (*udemawashi-undo*) is the basis of many Aikido throws. It is the "up" that makes an effective "down," an exercise in raising the arm and dropping it in alignment with gravity, using mass, acceleration, and relaxation in the most effective way possible.

The same approach underlies sword techniques and other tools from hammers to hoes. These fall of their own weight. They are not forced up then forced down. To do so is tiring and inefficient.

Standing with feet shoulder-width apart, *nage* will:

1. Raise arm to the highest point possible without straightening, stiffening or locking the elbow.
2. Allow the arm to drop, of its own weight, to the lowest point.
3. *Uke* test by attempting to lift straight up on the arm or testing for Unbendable Arm.



Variation

Some Aikido techniques require ducking a strike. Which is quicker?

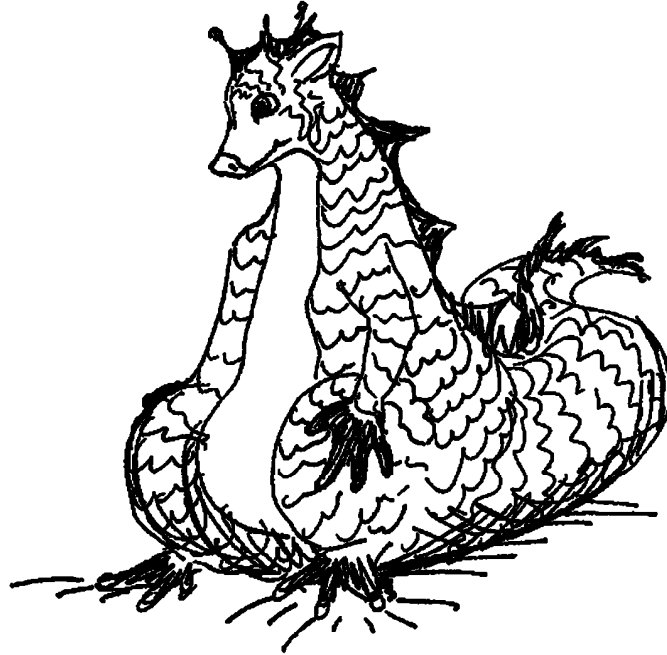
- **Dropping the body? or**
- **Lifting the feet?**

It is one of the paradoxes of Aikido (but good physics) that the most efficient way to drop down is to first go up. There is a striking example on film of Ueshiba performing the sudori throw. In this technique, nage drops down to hands and knees so that uke tumbles over him.

But there's more to it than that. Ueshiba first leaps up into the air, tucking his feet under him, then falls down completely.

Dinosaurs and Sand

For imaginary size and weight, be a dinosaur with a 40-foot tail.



Consider an hourglass and watch the grains of sand falling down.

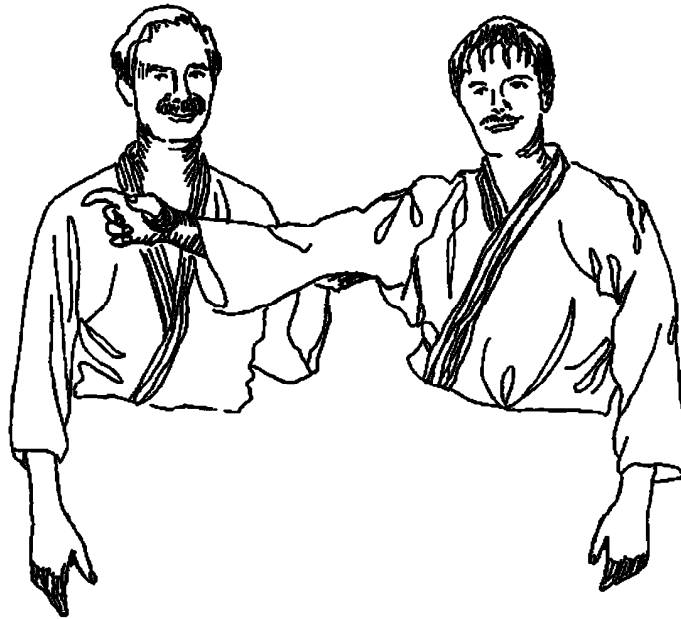
1. Imagine that you are the hourglass, warm sand running through the top of your head, streaming through your body.
2. Change the sand grains into individual grains of light.
3. Imagine what light would look like if it were a liquid.
4. Send this warm honey-colored liquid through your body, to drain out through holes in your hands and feet. *Uke* test.

Unraisable Arm*

An exercise in doing nothing.

1. *Nage* lays arm in *uke*'s hands and imagines it heavy — full of lead shot, or with fingers hooked under a fence wire.
2. *Uke* gently removes supporting hands.
3. *Uke* test by lifting up gently *behind* the elbow.

Nage does nothing, changes nothing. If *uke* wants to lift the arm, he must be allowed to lift all of it — all by himself.



Variations

- Think of buoyancy rather than weight. Float your arms in a swimming pool. Close your eyes, experience the feeling, then recreate it in air.
- Visit an aquarium that has seabirds and an underwater view at feeding time. Watch the birds diving, wheeling, soaring — *flying* through the water. To them there is no difference between the fluid air and the fluid water.

Do nothing! "Doing nothing" is not the same as "not doing anything."

— George Simcox

One of the lessons of history is that "nothing" is often a good thing to do and always a clever thing to say.

— Will Durant

Unliftable Hand*

With *nage* in *seiza*,

1. *Uke* attempts to lift *nage*'s hand as it rests on the thigh.

The test is up along the arm towards the shoulder (not straight up from the knee).

Uke may choose to see this as an attempt to lift *nage*'s hand. *Nage* can choose to see this as Unbendable Arm or as *uke*'s attempt to lift the attached leg and entire body by the one hand — in the sense of "If you're going to move me, you're going to have to move all of me" — obviously an impossible task.



Unliftable Body*

In groups of three,

1. Tension: Two ukes lift *nage* by grasping *nage's* upper arms. *Nage* keeps arms and body rigid.
2. Relaxation: *Nage* keeps arms vertical but relaxed, shoulders down, while imagining extending to the center of the earth.
3. Compare with tense arms and raised shoulders.



During the formal *ki* test, the instructor attempts to lift *nage* from the front. In practice, inexperienced *ukes* bend and tilt and push, striving for maximum mechanical advantage — skewing the test. Eliminate this by having two *ukes* lifting by *nage's* arms as shown.

Nage's arms must be straight. It is possible for *nage* to "pass" this test through basic physics by simply moving the elbows forward of the body — but that is not the *ki* exercise.



The Light Pole

In *seiza*,

1. *Nage* imagines a shaft of light, like a fireman's pole, up through the top of the head, extending down through One-Point, and out through the ends of the universe.
2. *Nage* imagines sliding gently down that shaft of light or riding an elevator down towards the center of the earth and beyond. *Uke* test.



The opposite of weight underside is revealed in the tale of the little old lady on her very first airplane ride who took care throughout the entire trip to never ever put her full weight down on the seat. What a foolish person! — and how very often we do the very same thing ourselves.

Extend Ki

CHAPTER 4 *Extend Ki*

If *ki* is defined as “mind” or “attention” then “extending *ki*” refers to a directing of mind or attention to a thing, to a point of focus, to a goal. The phrase “extend *ki*” seems to suggest that there is a starting point, a time when *ki* is not being extended. Actually *ki* should be extended all the time. In Aikido and in daily life, waiting until an attack occurs, and then trying to extend, attend, or set a goal, is too late. Hence a slightly different translation:

“Ki is extending.”

Why do you have to “extend *ki*”? Well, you don’t. You can also think of your body filled with light. But the concept of something going out of your body is easier to grasp. The next step, learning to align with the extension of energy from your partner and dealing with it appropriately, is the beginning of Aikido technique.

There is sometimes discussion of the power of mechanics versus *ki*. Actually there is no “versus” — the two work in harmony. *Ki* helps the mechanics to work more effectively while proper mechanics allow the *ki* to flow. We all extend *ki* (“mind” or “attention”) when driving a car or riding a bicycle. Remember aligning the hood ornament or fender with the side of the road when learning to drive? The task would be dangerously difficult if we limited attention to the few inches of road just beneath the tires.

How well you “drive” an Aikido technique depends on where you place your mind. If you do not extend *ki* during a technique or while under attack, you will tend to let your mind stop at the hand (just as you programmed your partner’s mind to stop at a green light (see page 12). A *nage* who cuts a technique short tends to push into *uke*’s power, ending up in a strength and weight contest. A *nage* who leads mind and body outside *uke*’s power can drop *uke* to the mat with seemingly impossible, magical ease.

Extending *ki* involves not only extending your own *ki*, but perceiving it as extended in others and aligning with that flow, that energy, that attention. You do not extend *ki* at the same instant that you step onto a moving escalator. You first find one that is going the way you want to go, align with it, evaluating and matching speed and direction, then go on your way.

Tenkan ("turning") appears to be a physical technique, but it is based on internal attitude and direction, blending and flow. It can also be done verbally and emotionally — and must be practiced in these ways to be truly understood.

I once worked in a technical reports unit responsible for turning the engineers' reports into meaningful English. A certain engineer had a reputation of being hard to deal with, difficult, cantankerous, and sometimes downright abusive; he had even threatened to kick one arrogant young editor down the stairs if he ever touched his stuff again. There was simply no working with him, went the report, and as the New Kid on the Block, the next sacrificial lamb, I was sent down to "try to deal with him."

He glared ferociously as I walked in. As this did not seem to be the time to launch into a lecture on technical style, I asked him instead to tell me about his project.

And he did, with enthusiasm and passion. He made the circuits and wires and pins and the rationale behind the design fascinating.

"And right now," I said, "this report does not do your work justice."

He blinked.

"Oh," he said. "Can you please help me?"

Because I meant what I said and because there was no "technique" involved I didn't understand quite what had happened. Nor did I quite understand why this supposedly fierce and ferocious man turned out to be a gracious, courtly, and delightful gentleman.

Now I have a name for it.

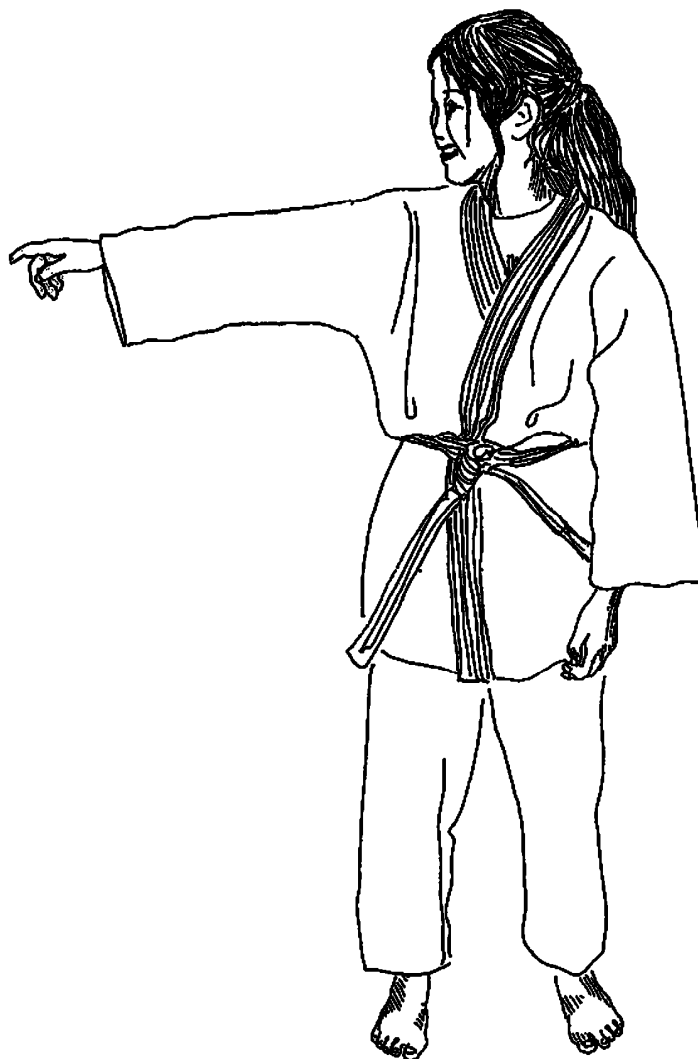
Blending, seeing things from the other person's point of view.

Tenkan.

Water Pump

This is a basic image for visualizing flow of *ki*.

1. *Nage* imagines a water pump at One-Point, with water whooshing up from the cosmos, through the One-Point and out through the hose (arm).
2. Draw lines on the opposite wall with a finger.
3. *Uke* test for Unbendable Arm.



Rolling With a Goal

Working in groups of three,

1. *Nage* rolls forward and back (*koho-tento-undo*).
2. *Uke* test by standing behind *nage* and pulling back from shoulders.
If *nage's* mind is on the test and the tester, *nage* will topple backwards.
3. With *uke* in the same position and offering the same test, have *nage* explain the process to a third partner sitting several feet away and facing *nage*.
4. *Uke* test while *nage* is extending his mind in explaining the exercise.



What you learn today, you can teach another tomorrow. If you know one thing, teach one thing.

— Koichi Tohei

*Steven R. Covey, author of the highly successful series **The Seven Habits of Highly Successful People**, insists that it is not enough to simply study the habits — you must teach them to another. Changing role from student to teacher changes you.*

Unbendable Arm*

For a basic explanation of Unbendable Arm, refer to “Unbendable Arm*” on page 18. Also experiment with the following.

Variations

- Extend arm tense, tight, “strong.” Observe effort required by *nage* to bend it; by *uke* to keep it straight.
- Extend arm tense and tight, then relax into Unbendable Arm.
- Unbendable Arm in any position from straight to bent.
- Unbendable Arm with the fingers bent up.

Here *nage* must think of extending *ki* out the wrist rather than the fingertips. (*Uke* bend fingers gently!)

Once Unbendable Arm has been mastered it is easy to keep an Unbendable Arm separate from the rest of the body. In Shin-Shin Toitsu Aikido we look not only for “mind-body” coordination but also for “body-body” coordination — “Unbendable Body.” Coordination between arm and body does not necessarily exist if *nage* thinks only of sending a stream of *ki* out the arm. *Uke* can detect this disassociation easily: instead of trying to bend the arm, lift the arm.

Nage, instead of concentrating on sending *ki* through the arm only, must imagine *ki* streaming out from the One-Point, an expanding bubble of *ki* that includes the arm — but is not limited to it.

See also the comments under testing for “Unliftable Hand*” on page 95. The idea is that *uke* may lift the *hand* but he will have to lift the entire body along with it.

In psychology, Unbendable Arm is considered a sign of deep hypnosis; the patient is convinced by the practitioner that the arm is unbendable. In Aikido the arm may be unbendable but is under the control of the Aikidoist, not someone else.

Walking with Unbendable Arm*

Walking with Unbendable Arm can change *nage's* point of view from simply trying to pass the test to providing a definite goal towards which *ki* or attention can be extended.

1. *Nage* makes an Unbendable Arm,
2. *Nage* walks forward.
3. *Uke*, standing to the side, attempts to halt *nage* by pushing against the chest (not an arm across the throat, please).

If *nage* extends *ki* — attention, purpose, and goal — out beyond *uke's* focus, *uke* will be unable to stop the motion. If *uke* has fixed attention and energy on *nage's* arm, no energy is left over to resist forward movement and *uke* is irresistibly drawn along with *nage*.

4. Repeat with a bearhug from behind.



Always give the attacker what he wants, with a little bit more Does uke want the hand? Then give him the hand; that is his battlefield Let him have his battlefield .

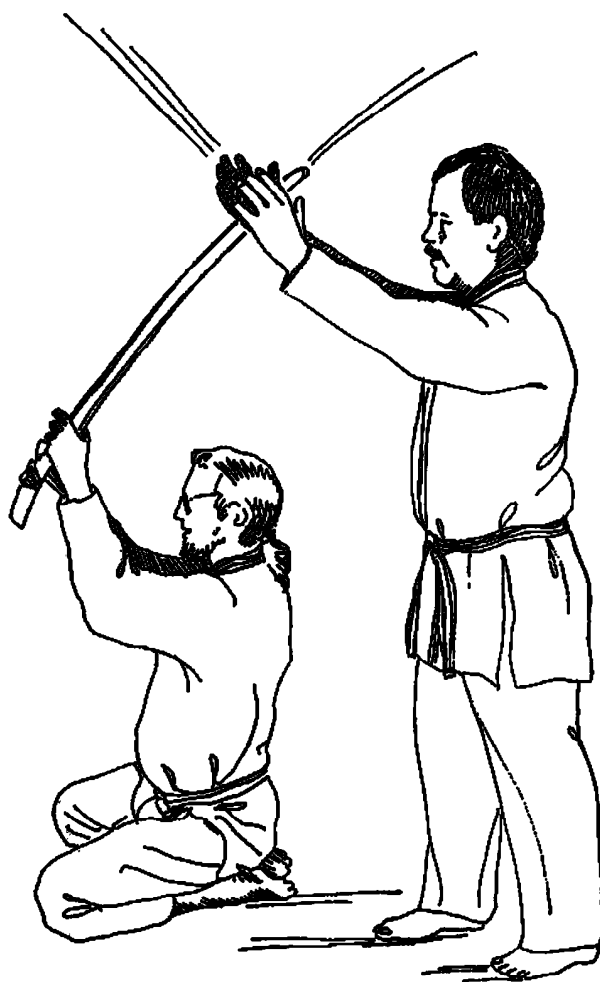
Now you move the earth.

— George Simcox

Light Swords and Fire Hoses

When doing any technique, imagine light or energy streaming out of your fingers like water from a fire hose. If you can't quite imagine that yet, letting water drip into an imaginary bucket works too.

When doing a technique, do it with a light sword, whether you are holding a real sword or not. We use swords in our practice in part because they are a traditional weapon and in larger part because they make "extending *ki*" visible. So would a fire hose.

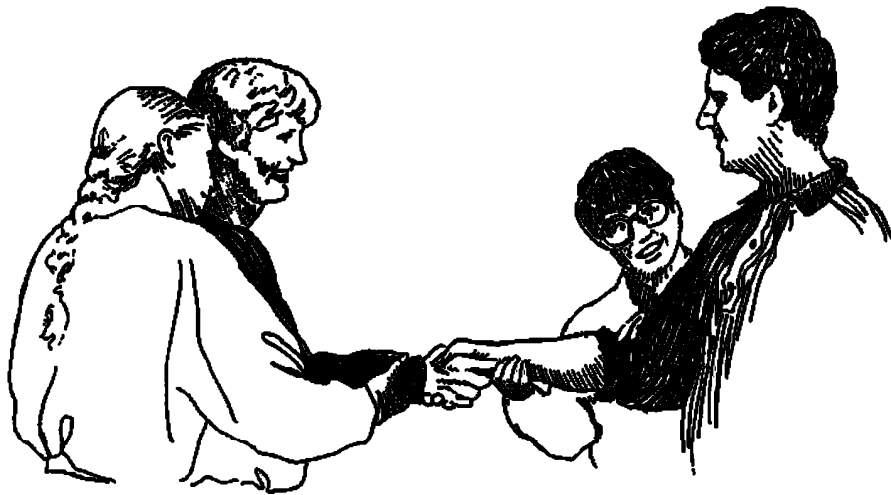


Shaking Hands

What is it that is so different between a limp handshake, a firm one, and a "hand buster"?

In groups of four,

1. Two *nages* shake hands.
2. Two *ukes* test for Unbendable Arm.



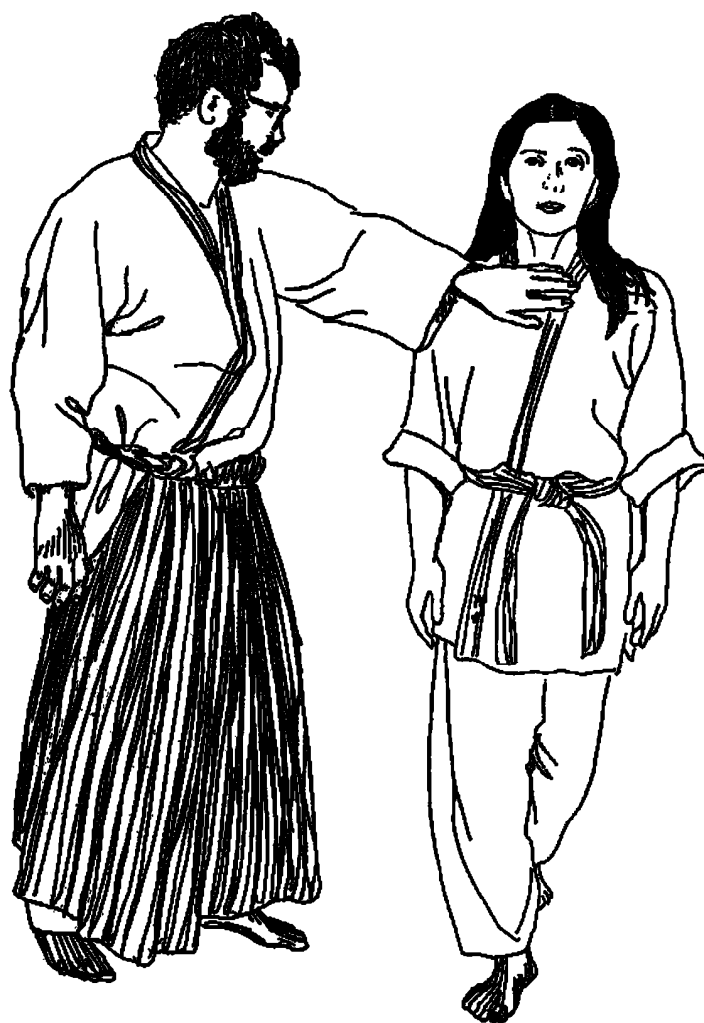
Variations

- Alternate *nages* extend *ki*.
- Both *nages* extend *ki*.
- Each *nage* extend appreciation and joy to the other.
- Each *nage* imagine wanting to be elsewhere.

Ki Door

This exercise combines *ki* with mechanics. If a door is not available, it can also be done with *uke* standing with an arm extended.

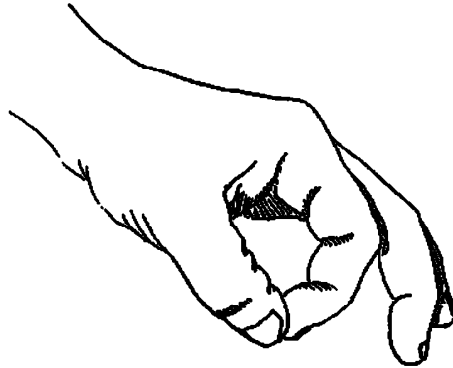
1. Try to push your way through a heavy door while placing your mind behind you or not extending.
2. Compare with the feel of walking through the door while directing your mind forward and extending.
3. Repeat while extending as above — but this time push the door open from the *hinge* side.



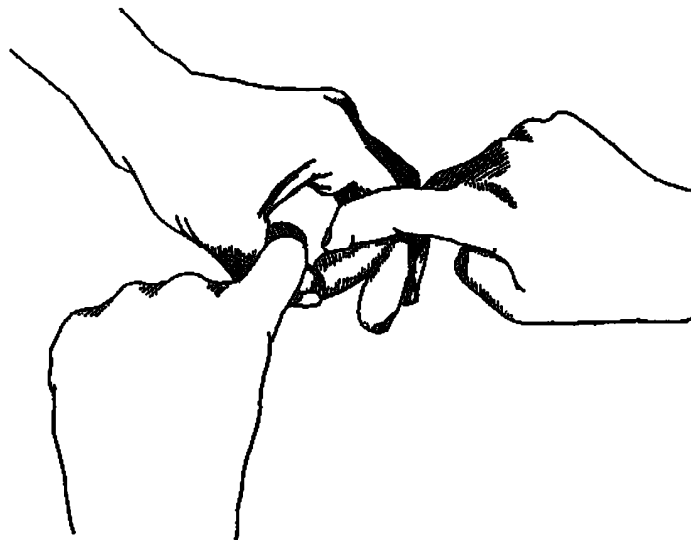
The OK Test

An example of *ki* flow coupled with the mechanics of anatomy.

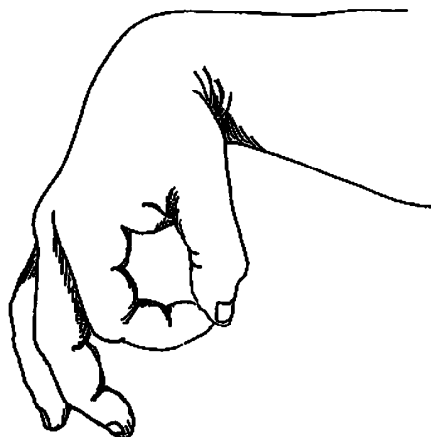
1. *Nage* touches thumb and forefinger and tries to hold the two fingers together while *uke* attempts to pull them apart.



2. *Nage* imagines *ki* flowing in a ring around the joined fingers. *Uke* test. *Nage* concentrates on One-Point. *Uke* test.



3. *Nage* bends the wrist at 90 degrees. *Uke* compare the forces necessary to pull the fingers apart. *Nage* compare the amount of effort required to keep them together.



The 90-degree wrist bend is the proper position for various Aikido wristlocks . This exercise reveals part of the reason for the importance and effectiveness of the 90-degree bend. "Ki flows" best in association with proper mechanics.

It also flows best where there is no internal dissonance. For students with upcoming school exams ("How do you like your English class?" or "How are you doing in Math?") uke (or Mom and Dad) can tell just by testing.

Block Hands

In karate, the breaking of bricks and blocks with bare hands is taught not only as a weapon, but to develop concentration, focus, and mind control. If the mind stops at the target, the hand stops at the target. If the mind continues through, the hand continues through. This exercise demonstrates the same internal focus and results.

1. *Uke* presents hands as shown, heels of hands firmly together (fingers and thumbs well apart for safety).
2. *Nage* strikes down (*shomen-uchi*¹) to center of hands while:
 - Focusing on the hands as target.
 - Focusing and extending past the hands.
3. Observe success in "breaking the block" depending on point of focus.



You can practice with any tool, be it a shovel, pencil, axe or kitchen knife. Once at a dojo party we had a "weapons competition". The weapon: a kitchen cleaver. The object: a heavy, hard green winter squash. The goal: to cut said squash in half in one stroke. An interesting test. Or have you ever had fried chicken Chinese style? The chicken is cooked whole, then cut up — bones and all — with a cleaver.

— Rebecca Nisley

1. To do *shomen-uchi* ("front strike") from left *hanmi*, raise extended right arm straight up overhead. Strike straight down while stepping forward into right *hanmi*.

Sankyo*

As Aikido technique, *sankyo* involves rotating the arm and wrist toward the body. It serves as a wristlock and come-along.

As *ki* exercise, the wrist is not twisted. If it is, the arms follow the upward motion of the wrist; the slightest upward push under *nage*'s wrist will easily raise *nage*'s arms.

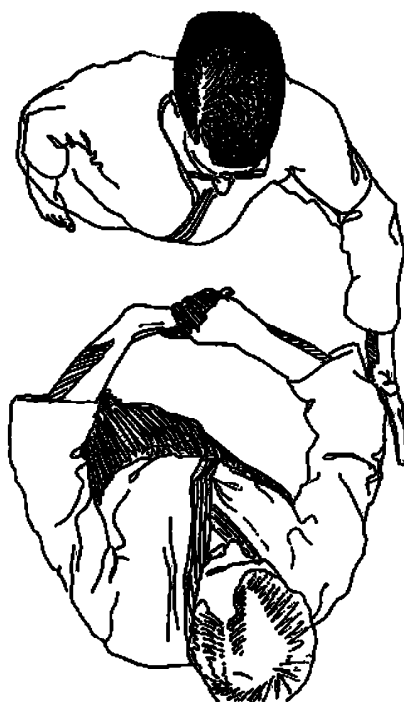
1. *Nage* assumes *sankyo*.
2. *Uke* tests by pressing into *nage*'s hands (towards chest).
3. *Nage* experiment with the following. *Uke* test by:
 - Pushing into hands and by attempting to lift *nage*'s arms:
 - Extending arms out from body.
 - Pulling arms close into chest.
 - Rotating wrist. (Rotation is along axis of arm so that thumb goes away from *nage*, and then up.)



Go With the Flow — Sankyo Circle

A test for the claim that Mind leads Body. In pairs,

1. *Nage* assumes *sankyo* (page 113) and imagines *ki* flowing in a circle around the arms, clockwise or counterclockwise.
2. *Uke* test by pressing the elbow from the side and trying to guess in which direction *nage* is driving his "*ki* circuit." (It will be easier to move the elbow in the direction of flow.)
3. *Nage* vary these two possibilities with a third: *ki* expanding from One-Point outward in all directions. *Uke* test.

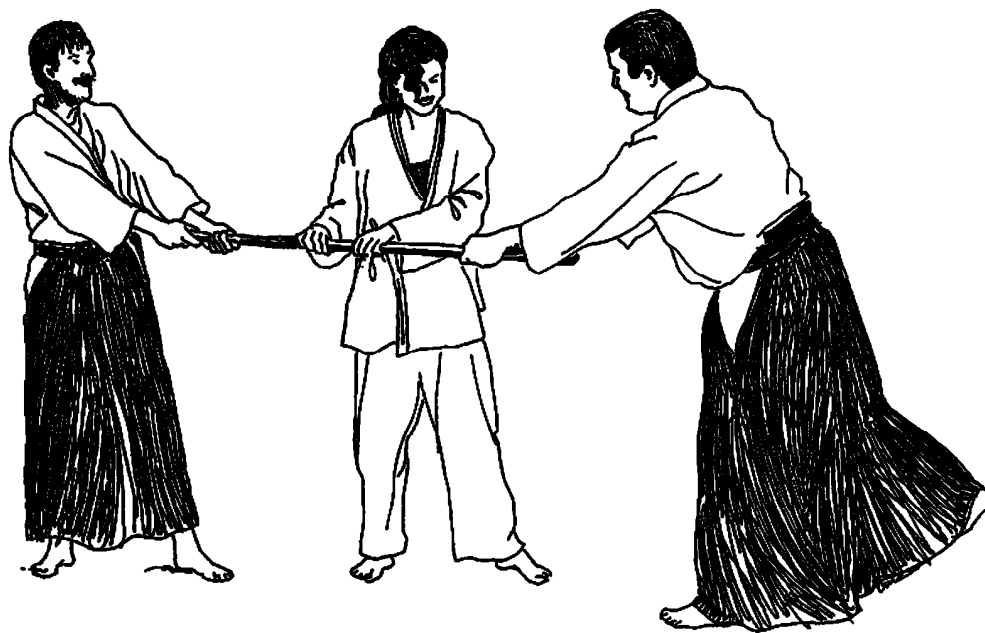


Jo Flow

One of the most difficult concepts in Aikido is to “go with” the offered energy or attack rather than resisting or fighting it. These exercises demonstrate the power behind “blending” rather than attempting to muscle one’s way through the technique.

In groups of three, with a *jo* (staff or a broomstick),

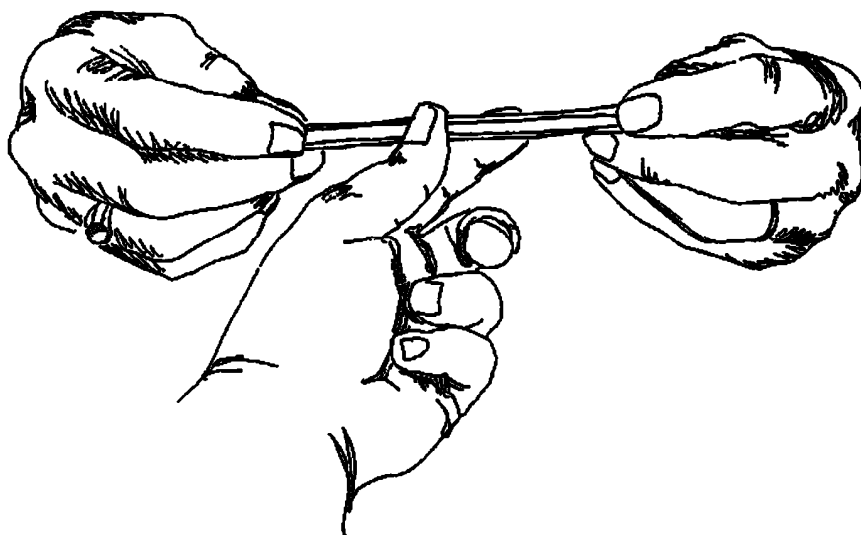
1. Two *ukes* pull on opposite ends.
2. *Nage* in middle pushes stick in one direction or the other.
3. Observe the effort required to move the *jo* or an *uke* by joining with the other. Does this change with attempt to move the *jo* rather than the *uke*?
4. Observe effort required if *nage* thinks of joining *uke* 1 and:
 - Opposing the actions of *uke* 2.
 - Helping *uke* 1 do what he is already doing.



Mini-Jo

Instead of jo and three partners, the exercise on page 115 can be done with two partners and a pencil.

1. *Uke* pulls on the two ends of the pencil.
2. *Nage* pushes in one direction or the other.
3. *Nage* observes the effort required if thinking of:
 - Pushing against one hand, or
 - Helping the other hand do what it is already doing.



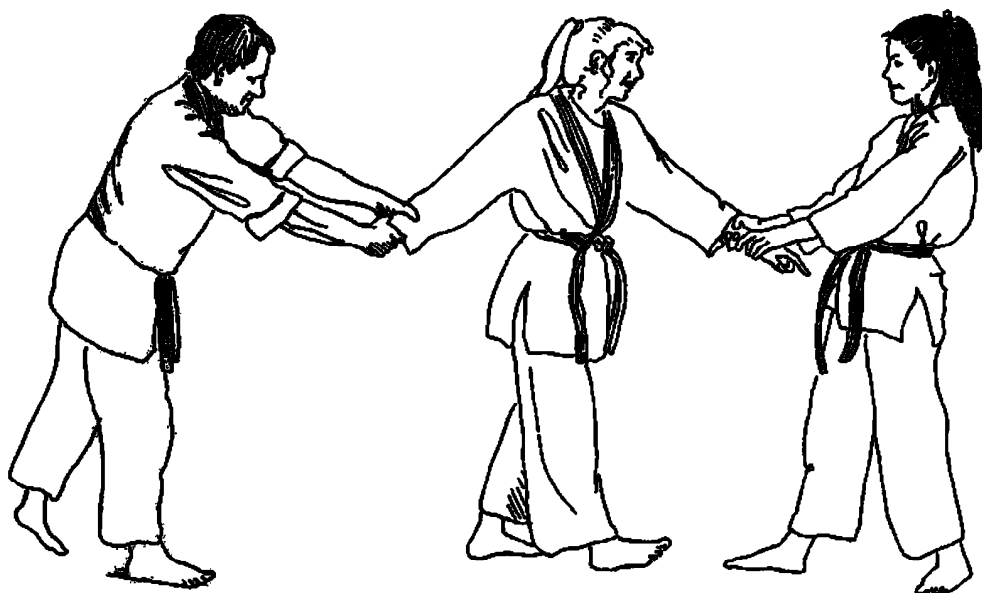
St. Jerome, when granted his request to see Heaven and Hell, was surprised to see in Hell a great dinner party. In a great hall of infinite length was an infinitely long table, loaded with every delight known to a hungry person — but the people were starving and desperate. Every hand ended in a fork ten feet long and because they could not get the food into their own mouths, all were frantically trying to snatch food from one other.

Heaven. Same hall, same table, same ten-foot forks, but the people were smiling, happy, and having a wonderful time, for instead of each person desperately trying to feed himself, they were feeding each other.

Arm Pulling

In groups of three, do the same exercise as with the *jo*, but,

1. Two *ukes* pull on *nage*'s arms.
2. *Nage* relaxes, extends *ki*, joining with one and moving in that direction.
3. Observe the difference between:
 - Pushing against one *uke*, and
 - Joining with one *uke* to help pull the other.



Pushups

Aikido rarely blocks, never stops, does not jerk or pause, but continues and transforms motion. This continuity seems difficult to learn, but nearly everyone used it regularly — to survive gym class or boot camp.

1. Do 10-20 pushups. Note the amount of effort required. Rest.
2. Do a second set of 10-20 pushups, but do them as follows:
 - Lie face down on mat, palms up on back.
 - Place hands on mat; do one pushup.
 - Return to original position and repeat.

This procedure eliminates motion, inertia, and all possibility of following and flowing with the upward or downward motion.

Note the number of pushups done, and the effort required to do them.

3. Observe the difference between following the flow of energy and inertia in a technique and trying to force a technique under your own power.



Mind Leading Body

In many warm-up exercises, such as the "Three-Minute Ki Exercise for Health" (Appendix B), movements are performed two or more times on a side.

1. *Nage* do an exercise such as Arm-Swinging twice on a side; *uke* test.
2. *Nage* do the exercise once on each side; *uke* test.
3. Repeat the sequence, but this time for Step 2 ("once on each side"). First imagine doing the movement, then follow with physical motion. *Uke* test.
4. Notice the sensations of your body during the exercise. Practice recreating the sensations and imaging the motion in your mind. In this way, the mind forms a "template" for the upcoming physical action.

Additive Ki

Ki can be apparently be added, joined, and extended from one person to another. In groups of three,

1. *Uke 1* test *nage* to determine the point of failure.
2. *Uke 2*, behind *nage* (out of sight), lightly touch *nage* and extend *ki* out to *Uke 1*.
3. *Uke 1* test *nage* with same effort as required previously to reach failure.



Variations:

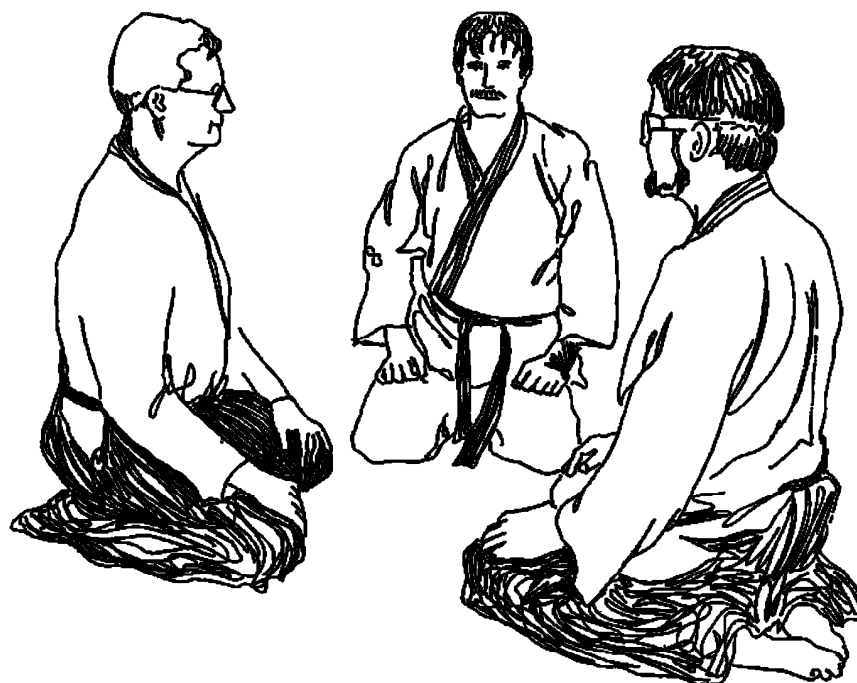
- Do the same test but absorb *ki*.
- Have a fourth partner test *uke 2*.

In the Greek New Testament, the word most commonly used for prayer was prosechein, a vow, a declaration, a promise of action, a directing of attention to a thing, far different from the medieval image of the helpless, humble suppliant. Now, the idea of joining with God, playing on his team, is a radical, even shocking approach to prayer. But here is the ancient, underlying rationale.

Sending Ki

In groups of two or three or more as *nage*, each with an *uke*,

1. Each *uke* test *nage* for “baseline” stability.
2. All *nages* extend *ki* to one *nage*. *Uke* test.



Variations:

- Does the intention of those extending *ki* matter? What if their image is to bowl one *nage* over?
- What happens if positive or negative *ki* is extended around the circle (from one to another in sequence rather than all extending to one *nage*)?

Bouncing Ki

In groups of two or three,

1. *Nage* places a hand on floor; *uke* presses and extends *ki* down on *nage's* hand. *Nage* tries to lift the hand with muscle. Note effort required.
2. *Nage* imagines joining with *uke's* downward *ki* and sending it all down to the center of the earth; it bounces back to help lift the hand.



3. Compare the effort involved with “bouncing *ki*” to the effort required to lift the hand through sheer muscle and determination.

Work with one *uke* pressing one hand, or two *ukes*, one for each hand.

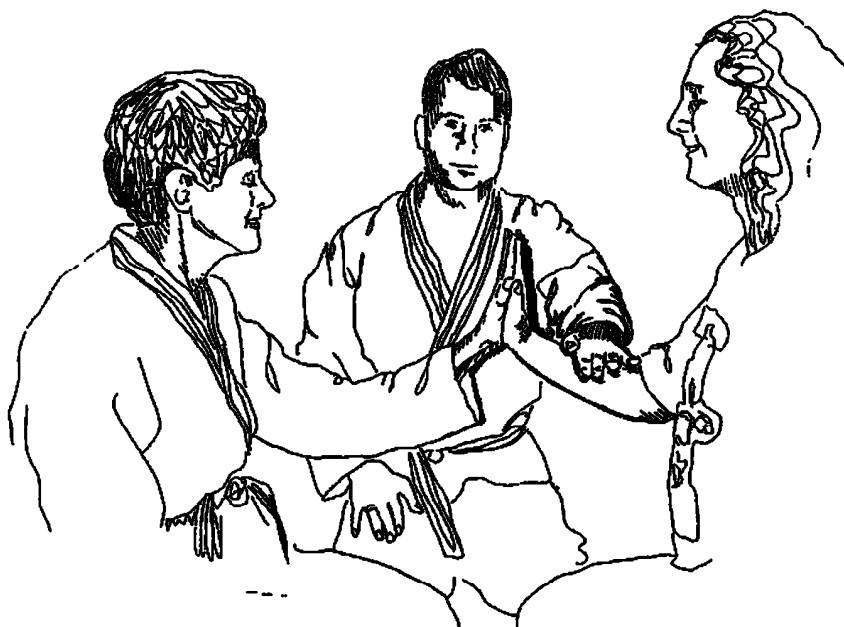
(During the technique, the second *uke* may test *nage* for stability.)



Absorbing and Extending

Ki can be extended or absorbed. In groups of two or three,

1. *Uke* 1 places a hand on *nage*'s chest or hand, palm to palm.
2. *Nage* imagines receiving and absorbing *uke*'s *ki*.
3. Third partner presses down on *uke*'s wrist. Notice the amount of effort needed to brush the hand away.
4. *Nage* imagines *ki* streaming out in all directions from One-Point, like an expanding bubble of light.
5. *Uke* or a third partner presses down on *uke*'s wrist. Notice the amount of effort needed to brush the hand away.



Variations

- Repeat using the "Yes and No" test (page 137).
- Repeat using dark thoughts or happy thoughts.
- Apply to *tenkan*, alternating absorption and extension.

Around 1941, Life Magazine ran a photo of wrestler Dick "The Bruiser" Addis attempting to lift a small man who placed his finger gently under the big man's chin. Addis could not lift him. The suggestion was made that the finger made a connection so that Addis was forced to lift his own weight along with that of the other person. We would say that it was just ki transfer and could have involved any finger to any part of the body. But, then again, who would believe such "nonsense" when the other explanation is so "logical"?

— George Simcox



Disrupting Ki — Wrist Tickle

Part of Aikido technique is causing *uke* to want to move. (Or, in the vernacular, “messing with his mind.”) When *uke* holds with firm but neutral energy it is difficult to do *tenkan* as there is nothing to work with. With no flow, there is nowhere to go. But *nage* can change the equation with a tiny, almost invisible motion that draws *uke*’s mind.

1. *Uke* seizes *nage*’s wrist firmly but with neutral energy.
2. *Nage* attempts *tenkan* and observes any difficulty.
3. Return to starting point.
4. *Nage* strokes underside of *uke*’s wrist then turns *tenkan*.

Observe the degree of difficulty in the two *tenkan* motions.



In Aikido, tiny beginning motions are behind many big results.

A backward roll begins not by flinging back the head but by a subtle rounding of the pelvis.

The Spinning Exercise (page 75), it is difficult to turn and change direction of the spin or even with One-Point. Begin the motion with a finger that acts like a little starter motor.

Just Do It

With *uke* holding *nage*'s palm-down wrist (*katate-tori*),

1. *Nage* determines the energy and force needed to pull away (or if pulling away is even possible). Returning to starting position, this time,
2. *Nage* looks at fingernails, reaches reach up and adjusts glasses or pats the hair.
3. Compare the energy necessary to perform these familiar motions to the energy needed to pull away from the hold.



Women are said to typically "look at their fingernails" with the hand palm down, men with the palm up. For this exercise, start with palm down then rotate hand palm up to look at nails. This rotation of the hand, like other rotational movements, is extremely difficult to stop.

Tenkan on a String

A *nage* extending *ki* and moving forward is the center of a circle. *Uke* rotates around the outside and is at a disadvantage. However, if *nage* moves backward, *uke* becomes the center of rotation. It is common for a beginning *nage* to back up rather than to move forward especially if *uke* pulls back, countering the *tenkan*. Experienced *nages* will switch to an entering technique (*irimi*) but beginners often can't believe they are backing up or pulling back unless the motion is made visible. To do so,

1. *Uke* and *nage* hold opposite ends of a cloth, belt, or string.
2. *Uke* notice how the *tenkan* feels when *nage* moves forward; when *nage* moves backward. Which is more compelling?



Backing up looks like this.



Extending looks like this.

(Nage's hand is inside. Uke's hand is outside.)

Aikido has been described as The Art of Leading.

It is also The Art of Following as one must follow and align before one can effectively lead.

— Susan Chandler

Floating-Foot Tenkan

When doing a *tenkan*, *nage* commonly slides forward with the same-side (forward) foot, then turns. With anything less than a cooperative *uke*, there is the possibility of collision.

Instead of sliding directly forward, *nage* will,

1. Lift the front foot (balancing on the back foot), then
2. Enter and turn 180 degrees (as for any *tenkan*).

The momentary balancing on one foot makes *nage*, like the balloon, sensitive to the slightest force or energy from *uke*¹. *Nage* naturally goes around and collision is avoided.

Starting and ending attacks, techniques, and rolls on one foot develops balance, timing, and a greater awareness of the energy involved. (It also protects against the dreaded "Hakama Toe," toes tangled in the folds of the skirt worn by advanced students.) See also "Rag-Doll Tenkan" on page 132.

Much of the confusion over the morality of "pacifism" versus "violence" is a faulty understanding of Good and Evil. It begins with the misperception that Good is inactive and dull, while Evil is active and interesting.

"Turn the other cheek," said Jesus, in a call for restraint and patience. It is a challenge to be more than an automatic stimulus-response machine programmed to explode into rage or revenge at any perceived affront. This exercise in pacifism ("peacefulness") and self-control has been misunderstood by many to mean an exercise in passivism and masochism.

But when Good is limited to passive stonewalling in the face of active, aggressive Evil, the exercise becomes: "Can I continue turning the other cheek long enough that he wears out his arm hitting me, gets bored, and goes away?" This protects neither the attacked, the attacker, nor the overall situation.

"'Turn the other cheek' is Aiki," said Ueshiba. "But in Aikido, we would turn before the blow. Thus the attacked is saved from pain and the attacker is saved from sin."

1. The flip side of this is the point of *kuzushi* or "unbalancing" resulting in a throw.

Balloon Tenkan

Because *ki* tends to flow in the direction that the fingers are pointing, the first step in *tenkan* is to curl the fingers (see page 34) in order to blend with and redirect *uke's ki*. A big strong *nage* may be able to muscle and force the issue with a small *uke*, but this approach can't win against a balloon. *Nage* must curve the fingers, must concentrate on extending *ki* and blending, or else the balloon will go wafting, skipping and dancing across the room.

No fair holding it with two hands except at beginning and end. Also, keep fingers together and curved — this is not an exercise in gripping the balloon with big basketball *hands*. It is an exercise in controlling the *balloon*.

This technique is similar to that used in lacrosse. The ball is kept in the basket by controlling direction and inertia. Think of your hand as the basket and the balloon as the ball. Try it again with just two fingers (no thumb).



Rag-Doll Tenkan

In Aikido *tenkan* techniques, the competitive or hesitant *uke* (who knows what's coming) may pull back. While the experienced *nage* knows to switch into an entering (*irimi*) technique, a beginner may valiantly attempt to drag the resisting *uke* around in a circle.

This exercise allows *uke* to practice extending forward while *nage* practices accepting and aligning with the energy. In pairs,

1. *Nage* extends a wrist and stands with One-Point.
2. *Uke* takes the wrist and *pushes nage* around in a circle.

A strange feeling? This is how it should feel.



*When true serenity is gained,
To bow and to bend we will not be ashamed.
To turn and to turn then will be our delight,
Till by turning, turning, we come 'round right.*

— *Traditional Shaker hymn*

Laundry-Bag Tenkan

One of the most persistent refrains by new students who do not yet understand the power of what they are being taught is "Yes, But On The Street . . ."

"Yes, But On The Street," insisted one new student, when instructed to turn a complete 180-degree *tenkan* rather than shortcutting, "you wouldn't do a complete *tenkan*."

Such responses contrasting Mat Time with Real Time usually mean that the student doesn't yet understand the power of the circle and imagines that in a Real-Life situation, it is only sensible to fall back on what has worked (or what he imagines to work best) — pure muscle power and linear energy.

There is a reason why the circle is almost universally considered the symbol of God, of holiness, completeness, and power beyond our comprehension. Much of this is good rotational physics. And the best way to develop awareness and confidence in rotational physics is to demonstrate it with a Real World example. An excellent tool is laundry.

In pairs,

1. Fill a laundry bag or plastic trash bag with old clothes, towels, to a weight of 20-30 pounds or more.
2. *Nage* stands still at one side of mat and heave the bag as far as possible across the mat with one arm using linear energy and muscle power only. That is, no wind-up, no swinging.
3. *Uke* mark the point where the bag falls.
4. Turn a partial *tenkan* and release bag to fly across the mat.
5. Observe the point where the bag falls.
6. Repeat with a complete *tenkan*.

Compare not only the distance, but the effort required to move the bag, and the power generated in the course of doing so.

Two walls of our dojo are lined with plywood panels. Although I can only heave the heavy bag a few feet with a one-handed throw, two tenkans will send a heavy bag flying across the entire width of the mat to hit the wood panels on the opposite side with an impressive whack. Note also that you must extend focus and intent to hit a particular spot.

Water Tenkan

It is often difficult for a new student to realize when he is backing up, when he has left his circle, when the energy has changed from rotational to linear. Practicing *tenkan* (and other techniques) in water encourages circular motion as linear motions are impeded by the resistance of the water.

A Weighty Tenkan

After turning *tenkan* around a staff or a balloon or a string, try turning a series of *tenkan* while holding a 10- to 20-pound weight in the turning hand.

With a very heavy weight, you may not be able to do it at all, but if you do, you will not be able to do it wrong.

— Mike Whitson

Walking Tenkan

1. Walk across the mat or the room, turning *tenkan* repeatedly in the course of the walking.
2. Compare the degree of stability or difficulty of turning *tenkan* with:
 - Wide-based, “leaping feet,” or
 - Feet directly under One-Point.
 - Widely swinging arms, or
 - Arms kept close to body and One-Point.

Roller Tenkan

On skates or a bicycle (using good sense and protective gear as required),

1. Try turning in a circle while:
 - Looking in the direction you are going.
 - Looking at your hand.
 - Looking outside the circle (that is, if turning to the left, look to the right).
 - Looking back in the direction you came from.
 - Looking at the center point of the circle.
2. Observe which of these are easier? Which are more difficult?
3. Repeat the above on foot on the mat.
 - For *nage*, which version of *tenkan* is easiest to do?
 - For *uke*, which *tenkan* feels more compelling?

Verbal Tenkan

There's far more to *tenkan* than physical motions. Just as an attack can be verbal, so can a *tenkan* be verbal.

See the works of Suzette Elgin ("Sources") for the underlying rationale behind verbal attack patterns and the tools to deal with them.

- See Dobson (1987) for attacks and defenses translated into the visible images of circle-triangle-square.
- See the movie *Grand Canyon* in which an Aikido master disguised as a towtruck operator uses these same tools and techniques.
- Use the circle-triangle-square analogy to diagram the encounter.

Attention

Because attention follows or is determined by the eyes, Aikido considers eye direction to be extremely important. Eyes looking one direction and body moving in another usually indicates a split between mind and body, shattered attention, and decreased concentration and strength.

On the mat, experiment with the following:

- Listening to a speaker while looking elsewhere. *Uke* test.
- Repeating any physical exercise (such as “Arm Swinging*” on page 74 or “Spinning*” on page 75). Direct eyes and attention in odd directions away from the path of the body. *Uke* test and compare with properly directed eyes.
- *Not* looking to see who has just come in the dojo door.

In daily life, practice with the following:

- Giving full, direct attention to a speaker.
- Giving full, direct attention to a task at hand.
- Concluding conversations completely before leaving.

(In this country, a gradual departure is a gentle way of signaling that a conversation is over. The Japanese have a handy and more direct technique for indicating the end of an encounter — a polite bow).

In the “Three-Minute Ki Exercise for Health” (Appendix B) the most common error is in the direction of the eyes.

The consequences of incorrect focus become quickly apparent if the exercise is done while walking. Failure to coordinate mind, body, eyes, and focus will leave the student dizzy and disoriented.

Yes and No

In pairs, as *nage* extends Unbendable Arm.

1. *Uke* tests as *nage* says: "No, no, no!" Observe the results.
2. *Uke* tests as *nage* says: "Yes, yes, yes!" Observe the results.

Many attempts at self-defense are essentially cries of "No, no!" and a pushing away — when the push is very fast and hard it is known as a punch or a kick.

Aikido says "Yes! Yes!" and draws closer. Aikido techniques may fail if *nage* tries to hold *uke* at arm's length, at a "safe" distance. This appears safer, but is not.

Step 2 of many a technique could be phrased as "Give *uke* a hug." This appears more dangerous, but is not.

The perception of safety or danger is in the mind. And just as you can choose to be angry or not angry, you can choose to be afraid or not afraid. The danger (or lack of it) is the same, although attitude can often increase or decrease the danger.

I once watched a man wandering through the street drunk or on drugs. Passersby observed him with a watchful calm that offered him no point of focus until one young woman panicked. "Get away from me!" she shrieked, and darted wildly about in confusion. Her noise, random motion, and terror made her everyone's focal point — and his. He set off in hot pursuit.

She was grateful to be rescued but others did not need rescuing, due not to size, martial arts training, or weapons — but attitude.

The attacker is amazingly dependent on the "victim."

Ikkyo-Undo*

Ikkyo-undo (the “first-exercise”) is yet another way of aligning with *uke*’s energy, matching speed and direction.

With *nage* in *hanmi*,

1. Hips shift forward.
2. Arms swing forward and up, fingers extended, stopping at forehead level.
3. Arms drop to sides, hands softly closed.
4. Hips shift back.

Pattern is: hips-hands, hands-hips.

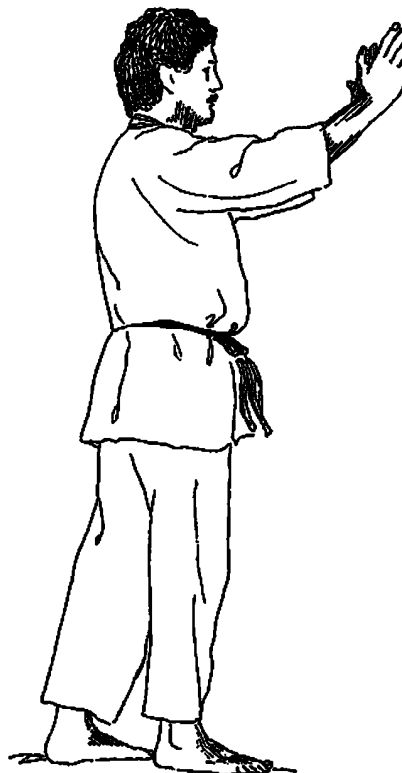
Uke test, with *nage* static or in motion:

- Pushing forward from small of back.
- Pushing perpendicular to chest.
- For Unbendable Arm.

Once the rhythm is mastered, repeat the exercise while *uke*:

- Strikes *shomen-uchi* with hand (see “Block Hands” on page 112).
- Strikes *shomen-uchi* with plastic bat

A plastic bat is roughly equivalent to the traditional bundle of bamboo. It’s noisy when *ikkyo* is incorrect, but causes no harm — and *ikkyo* improves immediately.



This is the exercise that brought me into Aikido. Karate students are taught to block the most ferocious overhead blows with forearms and so students spend years with sore, injured arms. “Isn’t there a better way?” they ask. “Which would you rather have,” instructors retort sternly, “a broken arm? or a broken head?” (These are the choices? — not in the Japanese tradition where blocking a sword strike with an arm will leave you with more than a broken arm or head — or less.)

After spending weeks observing classes to see how these Aikido people were “faking” their throws and falls, I saw an attacker came in with a heavy stick in an overhead strike that could easily have smashed an arm. But he never reached his target; nage came gliding in, blended with the motion, threw uke and even ended up with the stick. At that point I no longer cared if it was faking — teach me how to fake like that! They did.

Ikkyo With Attitude

Like everything else in Aikido, the success of *ikkyo-undo* depends upon inner attitude. Experiment with the following (*nage* actually saying the words aloud while doing *ikkyo*):

1. "No! No! No!"
2. "Yes! Yes! Yes!"
3. A cheery "Hi there! Thank you for the opportunity to practice Aikido!"
(See "Yes and No" on page 137.)
4. Notice how *uke*'s arm position changes depending on whether:
 - Modeling fear ("Uh, oh!") or
 - Welcome.



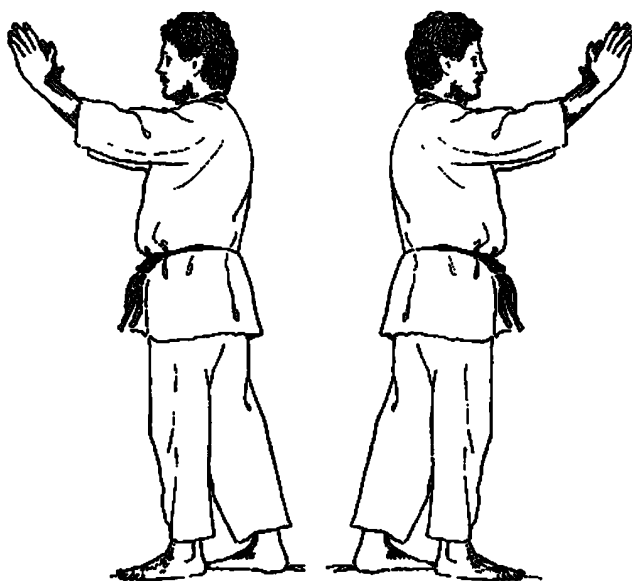
Two-Direction Exercise*

This exercise (*zengo-undo*) involves a series of turns, reversing direction. When applied to Aikido techniques, it models a response to attacks from two or more attackers coming from opposite directions. It also models demands from two different jobs or chores that threaten to divide time and attention. Turn completely, directing *ki*, mind, and attention, strongly forward while remaining balanced and centered. Pattern is "hips-hands-hands-hips."

In left *hanmi*, hands lightly closed and arms hanging naturally at sides,

1. At count of "One," shift hips forward, then swing arms up, opening hands and extending fingers.
2. At count of "Two," drop arms back down to sides, closing hands softly; shift hips back. On balls of feet, pivot 180 degrees.
3. At count of "Three," repeat Step 1, shifting hips forward, then swing arms up, opening hands and extending fingers.
4. At count of "Four," repeat Step 2, swinging arms back down to sides, closing hands into soft fists; shift hips back. On balls of feet, pivot 180 degrees.
5. *Uke* count aloud, calling "Stop!" at any point. Test by:
 - Pushing straight back on chest.
 - Pushing straight forward at upper or lower back.
 - Checking for Unbendable Arm.

Attempting to lift *nage* from ankle.



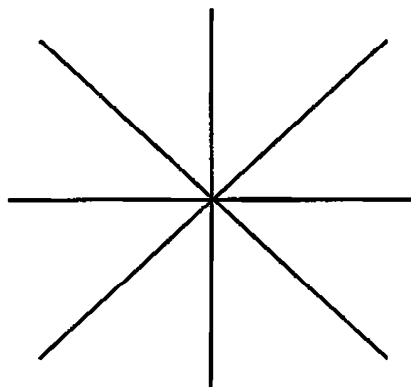
Eight-Direction Exercise*

The Eight-Direction Exercise (*happo-undo*) is *ikkyo-undo* (page 131) or *zengo-undo* ("Two-Direction Exercise*" on page 134) with a series of turns in "eight" different directions. Like *zengo-undo*, it models multiple attacks, but from two or more directions.

As in *zengo-undo*, the point is to turn completely, to direct *ki*, mind, and attention strongly forward while remaining balanced and centered. The temptation is to leave your mind behind, to split your attention, to be overcome by second thoughts, regrets, the accumulated weaknesses of small failures. Continuing through a series of turns, *nage* typically becomes more and more unstable, usually falling backwards in response to a test to the chest, having left mind behind.

Mechanically, this is a very simple exercise, and hopelessly baffling to beginners trying it for the first time. Think of moving through eight directions of the compass

1. :North-South,
2. East-West,
3. Southwest-Northeast,
4. Northwest-Southeast.



Or in a room,

1. Front-back,
2. Left side-right side,
3. Corner, corner,
4. Corner, corner.

The footwork indicated is simply this:

"Left-right," "left-right," "left-right," "left-right."¹

If you are an advanced student who has forgotten how confusing this is to beginners, do the exercise backwards (stepping back on the *ikkyo* motion rather than forward).

1. LF = Left Foot. RF = Right Foot

In left *hanmi* (left foot forward)

1. Step forward with LF.
Swing arms up into *ikkyo* then down.
2. Turn right 180 degrees stepping into right *hanmi* (RF forward).
Swing arms up into *ikkyo* then down.
3. Turn left 90 degrees stepping into left *hanmi* (LF forward).
Swing arms up into *ikkyo* then down.
4. Turn right 180 degrees stepping into right *hanmi* (RF forward).
Swing arms up into *ikkyo* then down.
5. Turn left 45 degrees stepping into left *hanmi* (LF forward).
Swing arms up into *ikkyo* then down.
6. Turn right 180 degrees stepping into right *hanmi* (RF forward).
Swing arms up into *ikkyo* then down.
7. Turn left 90 degrees stepping into left *hanmi* (LF forward).
Swing arms up into *ikkyo* then down.
8. Turn right 180 degrees stepping into right *hanmi* (RF forward).
Swing arms up into *ikkyo*; hold position. *Uke* test.

Variations

Step through the exercise as follows:

- Feet only, to establish direction and rhythm. When comfortable with these,
- Add the hands. When feet and arms are working together,
- Start on the right foot.
- Start in odd directions to eliminate dependence on a particular wall or direction.
- Do it with eyes closed to eliminate visual clues.

If you do this exercise based only on visual clues, you can become so dependent on them that you may be unable to do it in a different space, a different *dojo*.

Breathing and Meditation

CHAPTER 5 *Breathing and Meditation*

Since we all breathe, what could be more natural? What could be more absurd than studying how to breathe? In fact, correct healthy breathing is rare. Health problems due to faulty breathing are common and well-documented in the medical literature.

Incorrect ("paradoxical") breathing can actually strain muscles of the neck and torso. These, in turn, entrap nerves producing such side effects as dizziness and headaches, chest and arm pain, or numb fingers.

Breath control is considered so basic in disciplines from singing to yoga to martial arts, that it is studied formally — what can you possibly control if you can't control your own breathing? Breathing exercises can be used for relaxation, autosuggestion, and the formation or modification of habits and behavior. Because breathing is automatic, semi-automatic, and unconscious, it is considered as a bridge to the subconscious and unconscious levels of mind. This bridge can be used to internalize the concepts and sensations developed during *ki* testing.

Oxygen is a nutrient. *Ki* breathing allows you to take in more oxygen and expel more carbon dioxide than is possible during incorrect or even normal breathing. It improves mind and body coordination, increases energy, and enhances confidence. It can even provide such unlikely benefits as improved eyesight¹.

You can practice breathing in any position, even walking or driving. The traditional *seiza* posture is preferred in Aikido, as it does not compress the abdomen and diaphragm. If *seiza* is difficult for you, try using a stool or cushion, or sitting erect in a firm chair. You may also sit cross-legged on a comfortable but firm surface, although this tends to compress the

1. Deep breathing is an old astronomer's trick that enables the eye to see fainter stars than are normally detectable by the unaided (or oxygen-depleted) eye.

diaphragm more than other positions. Be comfortable (although not to the point of collapse or drowsiness). The point of *ki* breathing practice is breathing — not overcoming physical discomfort by sheer iron will and grim determination.

The standard perception of breathing found throughout the martial arts is that exhalation is "strong" and inhalation is "weak." This is one of the reasons for the powerful exhalation of breath and piercing sound of *kiai*.

Aikido, as usual, sees things a bit differently and strives for strength and power at all points in the cycle of breath.

To establish a baseline for observation,

1. Begin by observing your breathing as it is now.
2. Notice the following.
 - The inward and outward flow of air.
 - The feel of air in your nostrils, in your mouth and throat; the sound and sensation it makes in your head and chest.
 - How far a breath goes down inside your body.
 - Whether you can pay attention to your breathing and still let it operate automatically.
 - Any tendency towards partial, incomplete, skipped, or forced breaths.
 - The amount of time you can extend an exhalation or an inhalation.
 - The amount of time you can hold a breath.
 - That you can inhale or exhale at will; that you can "hold your breath" with lungs full, partly full, or empty.

Notice also that you must eventually resume breathing whether you want to or not.

Rather than fighting that mechanism, use it to learn that volition is best seen as "latitude within limits."

— Ben Swett

Practice of Ki Breathing

Begin *ki* breathing by practicing for 5 minutes at a time, working up to 10 or 20 minutes. Work towards a goal of a minimum of 30 minutes, ideally at the same time (or times) each day.

Tohei recommends breathing for 15 minutes before sleeping and 15 minutes after getting up in the morning.

1. Neutral position: Sit in *seiza* with lower back curved in, leaning slightly forward. Place your mind at your One-Point. Take a full breath, then
2. Exhalation: Exhale slowly through your mouth. Use a soft haaaaa sound. This gently controls the flow of breath with the back of the tongue. Spread the exhalation out over 20 seconds or more.
3. When you can exhale no more, bend slightly forward from your One-Point. This compresses the diaphragm and allows you to exhale any remaining air.
4. Neutral position (5 seconds): Focus on One-Point.
5. When out of air, imagine that you are still exhaling, that breath and *ki* are extending out to the ends of the universe and beyond, but curving into a return path.
6. Inhalation (20 seconds): Close your mouth and inhale through your nose. When you can inhale no more, return to Neutral Position.
7. Neutral position (5 seconds): Concentrating on One-Point, imagine that you are still drawing in breath and *ki*, that these are circling around your One-Point, gradually curving into a path from which they will travel out.
8. When you can inhale no more, lean back very slightly from One-Point. This expands the diaphragm and allows you to take in a bit more air.

*Breathe out so that your breath travels to heaven.
Breathe in till the breath reaches your belly.*

— Koichi Tohei

Cloud of Ki

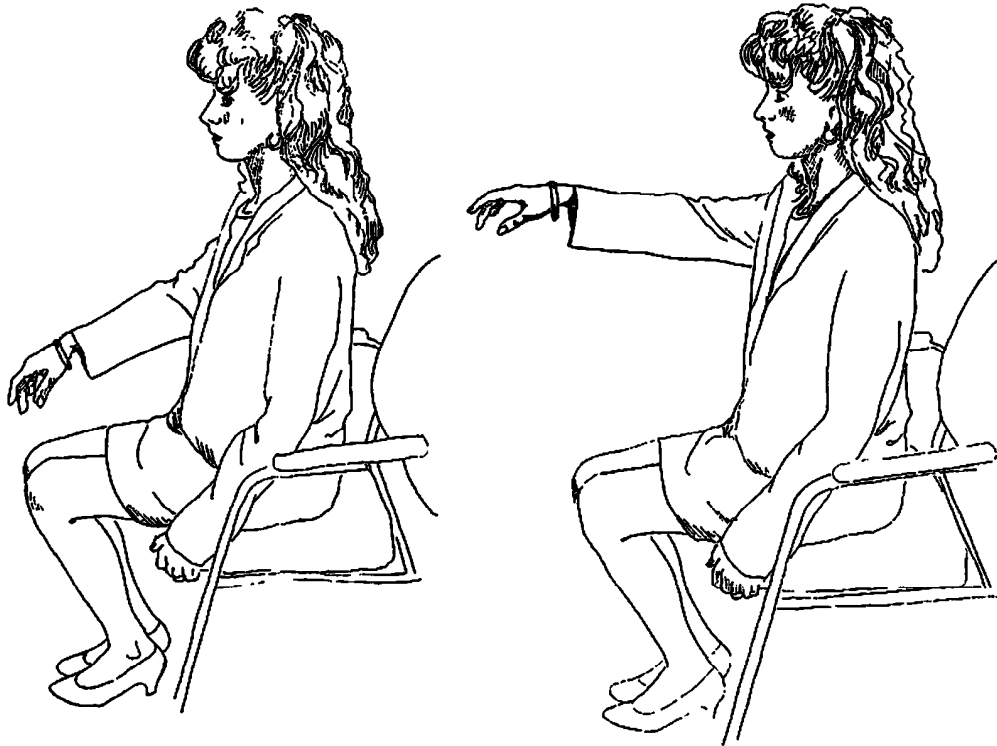
When inhaling and exhaling, imagine that you can see your *ki* flowing in and out with your breath.

If you have trouble visualizing breath, take advantage of cold winter air to see your breath as an actual, rather than an imaginary, cloud.

Rising and Falling Breath

Here is a tool for translating the invisible into the visible. Standing or seated,

1. Exhale completely and place hand at level of One-Point.
2. Inhale, imagining air filling your body from One-Point up.
3. As your body fills with air, raise your hand to follow the level of the air, as if your hand were floating on top of it.
4. Exhale, letting your hand drop as the level of the air drops.
5. Switch focus. Rather than the hand following the level of the air, let the level of the air follow the position of the hand



Beginners encounter a sense of panic similar, in part, to what an asthma sufferer experiences in being able to take a full breath. This exercise is a means of putting yourself on a "breath budget" and has been found useful by many asthmatics.

Pre-Kiai

How do you kiai without sounding like a squeaky mouse amongst the baritones?

—Cindy Tittle

Kiai is a powerful shout or cry “with *ki*.” For *nage*, *kiai* concentrates, focuses, and invigorates mind and body — if only because it requires breathing rather than holding the breath. For *uke*, *kiai* can be startling and disconcerting, an auditory overload¹.

Although *kiai* was clearly important to Ueshiba (and is fundamental to karate and other martial arts) it seems to be increasingly rare in Aikido. Many students feel embarrassed or incorrect (“squeaky”) not because they cannot *kiai*, but because rather than concentrating on the spirit, they concentrate on the sound — and it sounds *wrong*. Yet “wrong” may be nothing more than the impossible task of mimicking the instructor’s voice. Obviously a child will be unable to mimick a manly *basso profundo*; the same man attempting to mimic the *kiai* of a first soprano will feel forced and artificial.

The following exercise is useful in finding the appropriate sound for you. The sound you find in this exercise is not the actual *kiai*, but the exercise is a tool you can use to amplify the sound and to find the *kiai* appropriate to your spirit, intent, actions — and body.

1. Stand or sit tall and comfortable and place two fingers at One-Point. Open your throat to make round, full sounds, not flat tight ones. For example, *Ei!* works better than *Eeee* and *Ohh!* works better than *Ooo!*
2. Make the lowest sustainable “non-static-ish” tone you can manage.
3. Breathe, relax, try again, lower. Try to get a feeling of making that deepest tone you can produce to the position of your fingers, and that you can sustain comfortably for a full exhalation. Repeat several times.
4. Place fingers on throat and make the highest pitch you can produce and sustain for a full breath.
5. Now, back to One-Point. Start the low tone you found there and slide your fingers up toward your throat, very slowly. As your fingers rise, so

1. See Shifflett (2000, p. 158) for the tales of a Norwegian politician facing an angry mother moose with nothing but his voice. See Karl Friday’s *Legacies of the Sword* (1996, p. 85) for a similar encounter with a bear and application of *kiate*, “striking with *ki*”

- does your tone. Take it all the way up to your highest pitch (fingers at throat) in one full breath.
6. Play with this, going high to low. When you can comfortably produce relaxed even tones throughout the range,
 7. . . . You're ready to find your "natural" pitch which will lie just about center between tanden and throat.
 8. Repeat the exercise, stopping at the point midway between One-Point and throat. There you should find the tone that will be easiest to sustain, to reproduce and that will strain your voice least.

No, kiai is not the transverse of aiki. Except when it is. And it can be. Except when it's not.

Analogy: Take a magnifying glass. This is your body.

Find a sunbeam. This is your spirit.

Focus the light in the glass to make a fire. This is kiai.

— Chuck Gordon

I'm that dumpy middle-aged woman who looks like she has no business doing martial arts. I didn't kiai either; then one day it just started coming out of me. At first it was embarrassing, but now I see that when I kiai I move faster and have more power.

I don't always do it and I don't think about doing it when I'm doing it, but I've noticed that if someone much bigger and stronger comes at me hard, that's usually when it happens. Our dojo doesn't do much of it usually, but my sensei says don't think, do. If that's what happens, that's what happens.

— Susan Dalton

Expansion and Contraction

Changing size is the first step to changing point of view and there is nothing more valuable than a different point of view. The ancient oriental art of *bonsai*, the training and culture of dwarf trees, was originally developed by Buddhist monks as an aid to such exercise.

1. On inhalation, imagine your self expanding — doubling in size at each stage.
2. On exhalation, imagine your self contracting — shrink by half, half, half at each stage.
3. On inhalation, expand out and out. See your breath as light, filling your body, the building, the county, the country, the world, passing the planets, past the solar system, the galaxies, the ends of the universe. When you have expanded as large as you can imagine, imagine sending *ki* as an arrow of light, a jet, a seagull, that disappears over the horizon.
4. On exhalation, contract in to your body, then passing your body. Focus down to your skin, then on individual cells, molecules, atoms, and atomic particles.

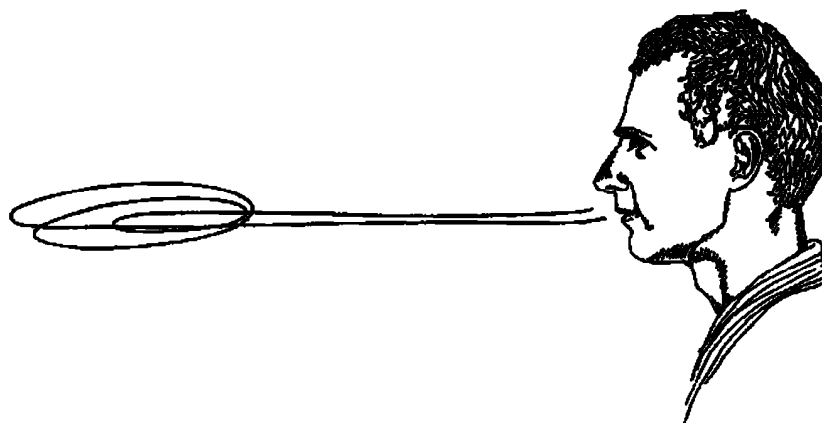
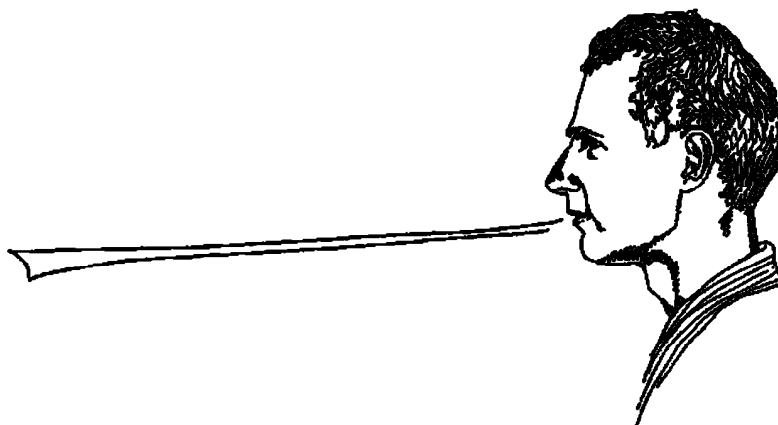
Many Aikido techniques involve expansion or contraction. In *kokyu-dosa* you want to expand, to become larger and larger until your circle takes in your partner's circle. In a grab, you typically want to become smaller and smaller, enabling yourself to move with ease within *uke's* grasp, within your own skin.

For a visual example of this exercise, see the movie *Powers of Ten*.

Stopping Ki or Circling Ki

While breathing,

1. Imagine sending *ki* out with your breath. Stop the breath for the 5-second resting period, then reverse the flow to breathe in. *Uke* test.
2. Imagine sending *ki* out with your breath, but during the 5-second rest period, imagine it circling around (several times if necessary) before returning. *Uke* test.



Breathing With a Bell

As an aid to envisioning your breath traveling out into the distance, practice breathing with a resonant bell. As the waves of sound travel off into the distance, follow them with your mind and breath.

Combine with "The Hum Test" on page 66.

Meditation

Ueshiba (like others such as Methodist Founder John Wesley) astonished his followers by arising at 4 a.m. every morning to pray and meditate. Aside from the daily morning miracle of sunrise, there is nothing magical about the hour of 4 a.m. except this: someone willing to leave the comfort of a warm bed at that hour is not playing or dabbling, but is in very serious pursuit of a goal and will achieve corresponding results. What are these results?

- Solitude in the midst of confusion.
- Time with yourself and with God.
- Patterning of goals, images, and activities.
- Marked shift in perception of time.
- Calm and relaxation.

The practice of meditation is often urged just for relaxation. But what is the benefit of relaxation? Not being tense? A good thing, but there's more. Relaxation induces an alpha¹ state, considered by many to be best for learning and patterning.

Because of its association with Eastern religions, meditation is viewed by some Christian fundamentalists as an Eastern heresy.

In fact, it is recognized by all the great world religions, including Judaism and Christianity (both originally "Eastern religions"). It is mentioned repeatedly in both the Old and New Testaments and throughout the writings of the great saints.

On the secular side, Freud and especially Jung recognized the importance of meditation in one form or another.

The following exercises feature not only imagery, but changes in point of view. Some are done while sitting quietly alone. Others can be done throughout the course of the day while immersed in the stream of "real life."

Tohei offers these principles for character development:

1. *Alpha* refers to the frequency of the brain's electrical activity of 8 to 13 hertz (cycles per second). Biofeedback machines and tapes are widely available but expensive compared to simply closing the eyes. On the other hand, you may want to experiment with an "electronic *uke*." There are many electronic biofeedback devices on the market today; inexpensive ones are available from various scientific-novelty stores. Ordinarily, a range of tones or colors indicates a range of relaxed or stressed states. Experiment with raising and lowering the tone or changing the colors. What happens when *uke* begins to test? At what range are you more stable? Less stable? Can you raise or lower the tone at will?

- Develop a Universal Mind.
- Love and protect all you meet.
- Show gratitude for all you have.
- Do good in secret (*entoku*) without expectation of reward.
- Have soft eyes and a composed manner.
- Be large-hearted and forgiving.
- Think deeply and see clearly.
- Maintain a spirit of unshakeable composure.
- Be vigorous and energetic.
- Persevere.

Much of the groundwork for these characteristics is laid in quiet, meaningful meditation.

The fruits of the Holy Spirit: Love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

— Paul, Letter to the Galatians 5:23

Counting

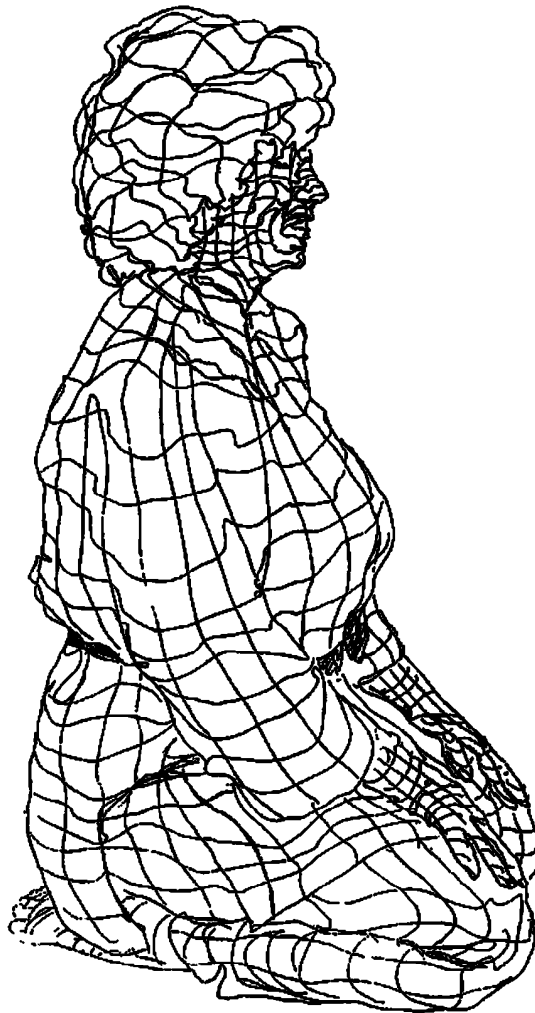
This deceptively simple exercise may reveal just how busy and cluttered our minds can be. You may find it very difficult to do on the first try.

1. Relax, clear your mind, and then count slowly to ten and back to one, thinking only of the number.
2. When you find your thoughts wandering, stop and begin again.
3. Got it? Now repeat from one to 100 and back again.

The Grid

This seemingly solid body that sits at my seemingly solid desk is a swirling cloud of electrons and other infinitesimally small particles. In one atom, the spaces between nucleus and electrons are like the spaces between sun and planets. We are indeed mostly space. This exercise asks that you imagine that reality as reality.

1. Imagine your body as a mesh of fine charged wire, an energy grid, or a cloud of electrons.
2. Rather than resisting oncoming energy, let it pass through you as easily as the wind blowing through a wire fence.
3. *Uke* test.



The Gridlock

This is the real "On The Street."

As many have discovered, it is very easy to maintain One-Point and good will towards men in the peace and serenity of the dojo, a *ki* class, a convent, a meditation garden. But most of us must return to the real world, perhaps by way of heavy traffic — a daunting challenge to the relaxed life. In the Washington, D.C. area alone there are over 900 cars per square mile and their drivers, with their own perceptions, attitudes, traditions, misconceptions, inexperience, and possibly alcohol or drugs — a volatile mix. In this area alone, more than 16,000 motorists a year are charged with driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs; in 1994 these factors led to over 6,600 crashes and 130 fatalities. Nationwide, more than 110 people are killed, and 5,700 injured on the roads every day.

Teens comprise only 7 percent of drivers, but cause 28 percent of highway injuries, nine times the rate of older drivers. Forty percent of teenage deaths occur on the highways. During the Viet Nam war, death rates for young men actually *dropped* as young men were removed from American roads to the relative safety of guns and grenades.

Some attribute our collective madness on the highway to our identification with our cars. The protective anonymity of tons of steel and tinted windows tempt us to behave in ways that we never would otherwise.

"I AM my expensive and prestigious luxury car — and you want me to move over to let you pass?"

According to AAA, 85 to 95 percent of crashes are caused by driver error, from honest mistakes, not by hostile people looking for a wrangle. Nevertheless, those who assume hostile intent and retaliate end up in a back-and-forth dance that can end in disaster. While many of us study martial arts for safety "on the street," we seem oblivious to danger "on the road." Better to wear a seat belt, drive kindly and sensibly, and practice inner calm.

In most of the Aikido world contests and tournaments, based on fighting and defeating an opponent, are forbidden. This does not mean that there is *no* competition, for what is in Aikido is humans and most humans are endlessly competitive. Forbid competition and the competitive mind will simply come up with more subtle ways of competing. Competition can

help to build skill, but Aikido techniques are based on the theory of non-dissension. Failure to grasp the theory means failure to master the techniques. Tohei urges those who want competition to compete — *with themselves*.

A person who likes contests and matches should try having one with himself. For instance, a quick-tempered man might say, "Today I'm not going to get angry once " If he manages to hold his temper all day, he wins; if he does not, he loses.

If we make progress without causing anyone else trouble and without bearing ill will against anyone, we will get to the point where we are always winning. That is real victory. If we fail to win over ourselves, even though we win over others, we are doing nothing but satisfying our own conceit and vanity.

There is hardly a better arena for such an internal contest than on the road. Use rush-hour traffic to practice blending, flowing, extension of good will, and *ma-ai* ("correct distance") in the car just as in other physical vehicles. Practice not reacting, not wasting energy ascribing ulterior motives to the speeder who zooms up from behind flashing his lights and honking for you to get out of the way.

When such challenges occur, note any emotional reactions and consider the following:

- If a boulder or a lion or a sword were hurtling towards you would you waste time feeling huffy? — or just get out of the way?
- Notice your shoulders. Are they up around your ears? Drop them. Breathe.
- Instead of being angry because someone cut in, can you be pleased that you blended well, successfully avoiding injury, higher insurance costs, and legal entanglements for both of you?
- Must you always speed up to pass? Notice that you can also fall back. Blend.
- Must you be angry? Your anger will not make a bit of difference to an oblivious offender, but it will affect *you*.
- Can you take someone who is stuck in traffic, trying to make a left turn, under your protection? If not, why not?
- Recall incidents in traffic and your reaction to them. *Uke* test. Observe how old some of these memories are.
- Observe the time factor involved in your reactions. What is the actual elapsed time that defines traffic as "moving well" versus actual elapsed time that causes impatience, rage, and fury? How much of

this time and how much of your reaction depends on the space of time you chose to allow for travel?

- If you are a physically small human disturbed by bullying tactics or lack of consideration by others, observe your own behavior when in a large powerful vehicle and faced with pedestrians.
- If you are a physically large human, walk across a large busy intersection, and observe how it feels to be a pedestrian walking in company with 3,000-pound bodies that assume greater size, strength, and speed give them the right of way.

Observe others who play these roles and notice that behavior is not a function of vehicle design but of the driving spirit.

While it is easy to rage about other people's conduct on the road, try this contest for the competitive soul: can you make it home or over [X] miles without committing a single error of judgment or of courtesy? Here are the rules of the game:

- Obey the speed limit.
- Dedicate yellow lights to drivers attempting to turn left rather than speeding up and zooming through yourself.
- Signal all turns and lane changes, planning ahead rather than cutting in or out, or braking at the last minute.
- Yield to pedestrians.
- Obey all traffic signals.
- Assume confusion or insanity rather than malice.

Although increasingly rare in practice, not one of these is anything other than standard motor vehicle law or good sense, whether operating a vehicle of steel and plastic or one of flesh and bone.

The emotional hook of perceived hostile intent is often worse than the action itself. I once lost all patience with a driver who was weaving unsteadily down the road. My perception changed radically when the driver made a clumsy left-hand turn from the middle lane — into the hospital emergency room.

Thomas Merton recounts an old tale of "the empty boat." If an empty, drifting boat bumps up against a boatman on the river, even a bad-tempered man will not lose his temper, but simply deal with the situation. If a boat with a man in it does exactly the same thing in exactly the same way, the boatman will scream and curse. But what has changed?

I Am

As mentioned in "The Gridlock," people behave in strange and different ways when wrapped in a cocoon of steel and anonymity. Perceived threats to personal dignity, personal rights, or prowess turn deadly especially when the power, speed, model, style, and dollar value of the particular vehicle being driven become strangely confused with personal identity.

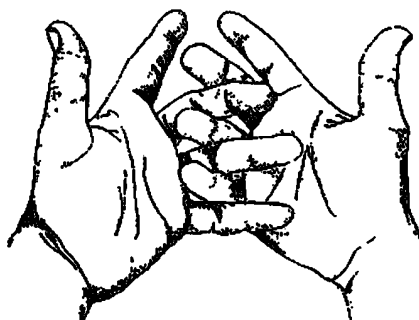
In fact, you are to your body as your body is to your car. Neither is really you. This classic yoga meditation is an aid to defining the difference.

1. Make a list of all the things that you "are."
2. Gently peel away the defining mask. For example,
 - "I am a man." No, that is the physical vehicle that I inhabit.
 - "I am a mother." No, that is the current job description that I fill.
 - "I am a afraid." No, that is a current state of emotion.
 - "I am"
3. Imagine that you have lost your wallet, all identifying paperwork, your resume, all belongings, all contact with friends, family, your previous world.
 - Who are you?
 - What do you do?

Mudra of Mind-Body Unification

In yoga, a *mudra* is a hand position, used in meditation, that helps to achieve the very thing that it symbolizes. In *seiza*,

1. Fold fingers together as shown. The tips of each pair of fingers touch; thumbs cross, left over right, to touch the bases of the index fingers.
2. Raise fingers to eye level.
3. Imagine *ki* streaming from your One-Point up through your body, out your arms, and through the fingers as if through the nozzle of a fire hose.
4. *Uke* test. Compare the stability of this pose with other tests done in the ordinary *seiza* position.
5. Lower the arms, fingers still joined in the mudra, to a natural and relaxed sitting position. *Uke* test.

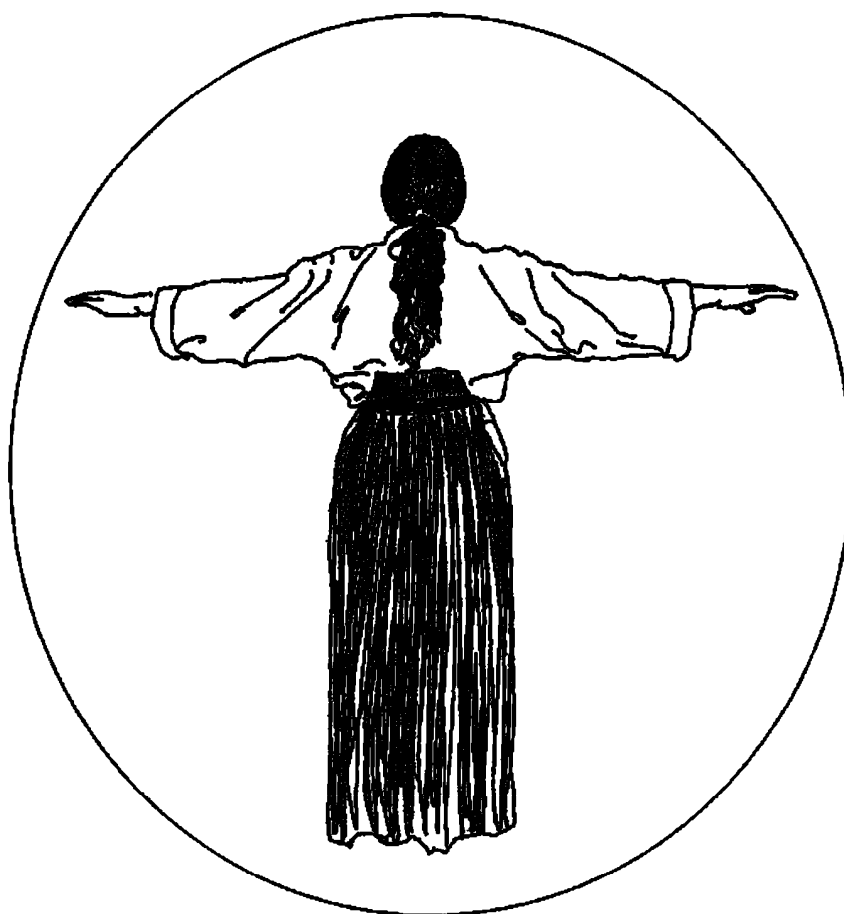




The Light Bubble

An exercise for expanding *ki*.

1. Imagine a warm spark of light at your One-Point.
2. Imagine what light would look like if it were a liquid.
3. Imagine expanding this light outward, surrounding yourself with such a substance. Extend the bubble below your feet and above your head. To help with this imagery, trace a circle with your finger as far as you can reach.
4. Pay special attention to your back, turning within the bubble to check that area and any holes or weak spots.
5. Firm up the outer skin of your light bubble (6 inches to a foot thick) to the consistency of soft rubber — so that slings and arrows, dark words and looks can't enter to the inner core.
6. Have *uke* test gently at *nage*'s request throughout the course of construction of this bubble.



Happy or Sad

Consider the effect of focusing on happy or sad images, on calm or violent images.

1. *Uke* test while *nage* looks at:
 - A happy or cheerful picture.
 - A sad or unhappy picture.

The pictures may be as simple as the sketches below.



The first time I saw this demonstrated, in a speech class, the group reacted with shock, outrage, and shouted fury — it simply could not, *must* not be true. They were particularly angry and frightened because it did work so very well.

And it was so simple. Do things have to be difficult to be effective?

— George Simcox

Morihei Ueshiba Meets Rube Goldberg

The common vision of the martial artist is that of a hard-eyed, hard-bitten, potential killer. Someone very Very Serious. Aikido preaches "soft eyes, loving protection, and a large heart" and Zen tradition is filled with tales of wise old "fools" of impish and zany humor. Jay Gluck witnessed one of the best, an encounter between O-Sensei and cartoonist Rube Goldberg. (See Gluck, 1992).

Rube was visiting Japan. He strolled into the Aikikai Hombu Dojo stepping up onto the elevated floor "a huge cigar protruding from his maw like a naval cannon" — and his shoes on. As horrified students raced to remove Rube's shoes, O-Sensei heard the commotion and came out to investigate. "As his eyes met Rube's O-Sensei's eyebrows rose. His eyes lit up. His straggly beard vibrated. 'Haw!' he hawed."

Pushing Rube's interpreter aside, he grabbed the befuddled little man by the arm and hauled him, cigar "streaming smoke like dragon spoor," into the sacred *tokonoma* alcove. *O-Sensei* shouted orders. Startled students raced for their practice weapons and attacked, screaming. *O-Sensei* stood in the middle of the vortex whirling, ducking, spinning as bodies flew everywhere. Then it was over. Rube walked out of the alcove, "laughed and tugged *O-Sensei's* wispy white beard."

O-Sensei . . . pulled the immense stogie out of Rube's mouth, bopped him on the head with it, jammed it back into his mouth and laughed. Rube guffawed. They both laughed like the ancient fools. Then both turned and left. Not a word had been uttered.

I had never heard this story before, nor had anyone else I mentioned it to. Thinking it might be a charming fiction that I had taken all too seriously, I wrote author Jay Gluck. "I assure you," he replied, "the Zen Fools episode involving *O-Sensei* and Rube is history."

"No one present realized the significance of the strange scene."

"Other witnesses I questioned months later were interested only in the fact that they had been granted the honor of tangling with their 'angel of God' like a gaggle of Jacobs.

None of the Japanese knew who or what the funny looking man in the porkpie hat and stogie was.

As he told me when I questioned him some months later, *O-Sensei* recognized what he was — *from his eyes.*"

Dark Side

What you think and where you place your mind matters. It matters more than most of us will ever know.

1. *Uke* test while *nage* listens to:

- The 11:00 news or an article read from a lurid tabloid.
- A report of an example of goodness, wise kindness.
- Favorite music (various examples).

2. Repeat while *nage* thinks about:

- What a terrible day it was.
- What a great day it was, or,
- An example of a single good thing from the apparently terrible day considered above.

Avoid spiteful gossip, sensationalism, and those who revel in dirt, dishonor, and scandal. Test the difference between:

1. Noting the fact that someone has made a mistake and
2. Enjoying the fact that someone has made a mistake.

The first may be a statement of fact. The latter is an all-too-effective means of "tuning the spirit" (see "The Spiritual Spectrum" on page 176) to the dark side. These tests reveal the options and the consequences of your point of view. Choose. You will carry your choice with you throughout the day and throughout life.

Jesus said "If thine eye causeth thee to sin, pluck it out," a Hard Saying that seems to make little practical sense. But in the original Greek, the word used is *ophthalmos*. It meant the physical eye but it also meant "point of view."

Does your point of view cause you to be dark and negative?

Better to change it than to fill yourself with darkness.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

— St. Paul, *Philippians* 4:8

Radio and TV

What you see and what you dwell on becomes part of you. There is a thin line between simply observing your surroundings and taking what you observe as ideal, as fact, as normal behavior, as reality. Much has been said about the effect of the media on children, as if adults are somehow immune. This is simply not so.

On Halloween, 1938, Orson Welles' Mercury Theater of the Air presented H. G. Wells' *War of the Worlds*, a tale of a Martian invasion of Earth. Many listeners reported being frightened on hearing the apparent "special news announcements" — then switching to other stations and realizing what they were actually hearing a drama¹. All should have been clear within a few minutes; the first half ends with the world overcome by Martian craft and their poisonous gas. Second half: tales of the survivors which could only be dramatic material. Nevertheless, there was mass panic and even suicide.

In the aftermath, the program and its effect on listeners was cited as an example of the power of radio over human minds and emotions. Its effect was due to excellent scripting and acting². Today, faced with even better special effects and visual media, we like to believe that no such power exists. Merchandisers, who know better, spend billions on advertising. In Aikido, we see the *War of the Worlds* effect every day— with only a slightly longer time frame.

Many come to Aikido classes to train for safety "on the street." As noted, "on the street" usually means "as seen on TV or in the movies" and it is mostly bunk. With every terrifying new martial arts movie, we see a surge of terrified new students. They want arm-breaking techniques, killing blows to the spine. They are terribly disappointed when, instead, we teach them how to roll, how to turn. We have even had to bar some students from classes because of their insistence and persistence in trying dirtied-up versions of techniques on their classmates.

-
- 1 The real essence of the Scientific Method. My old geology prof boiled down all the pages devoted to that topic in every beginning science book to just this "How do you know?" i.e., "Aieee! We're being invaded by Martians!" "How do you know?" "Because Orson Welles on the regular weekly science fiction Mercury Theatre of the Air says so." "Hmmm. What do other information sources have to say?"
 2. It was not due to the novelty of radio as radio was no longer a novelty. The first radio news aired in 1916, the first paid radio commercials in 1922. NBC was founded in 1926, CBS in 1928, 10 years before the "invasion" by Martians. (ABC was a later spinoff formed in 1943 by Life Savers millionaire Edward Noble.)

They are afraid because they believe what they have heard or seen on the screen, almost daily: that psychopathic killers lurk behind every bush and the monster never dies. (See Ebert, 1994.)

It is extremely useful to remember that the programming itself is not the point. It is there only to get you to buy the ticket or to watch the commercials¹. The best way to hook a customer is to give him something he wants or needs or thinks he needs. The best way to do that, as many dealers know, is to create an addiction.

It is advertising wisdom that "sex sells." So does an enjoyable surge of adrenaline. A program that can use these to hook the viewer on his own brain chemicals is assured of an audience. Notice the current emphasis on revenge: [X] did [Y] to [Z] "and now he's out for revenge!"

An even better formula is *justified* contempt and vengeance. Presenting a bad guy who murders priests and nuns or helpless young girls distances the viewer from our standards of justice and frees him to believe in a cruel monster who deserves anything he gets.

Problem is that the bad guy is fictional. The emotions are real and serve as future templates for thought, example, and behavior.

Watch for the hooks in programming and advertising.

1. Which emotions does the presentation attempt to manipulate or stimulate and how is this done?
2. For commercials, what are the implied benefits if you buy?
3. What is the underlying spirit? and where does it lie on the Spiritual Spectrum?

The essential is to excite the spectators. If that means playing Hamlet on a flying trapeze or in an aquarium, you do it.

— Orson Welles

1. In 1928, William Paley, 27-year-old advertising manager of his father's cigar company, signed a \$50-per-week advertising contract — while Dad was safely away on vacation. young Paley was roundly criticized for his extravagance on his father's return, but when cigar sales soared he cut out the middleman and founded the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS).

Treasures

1. Make a list of five specific events or situations that were wrong, unfair, unkind, mean, spiteful, or cruel. These may be things you have experienced or seen yourself, read about in the paper, or seen on the news.
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -
2. Meditate on these. Note mood. When ready, have *uke* test.
3. Now list five specific events or situations that were right, just, wisely kind, good, and beautiful.
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -
4. Meditate on these. Note your change of mood. When ready, have *uke* test.

If you can't think of five, are you really alive?

Now consider: Why is it easier to recall the barbs and slights of others rather than the good done to or for us? If true for you, change it.

— George Simcox

Notice that you yourself caused depression or elevation of spirit by choosing what to think about, what to dwell on.

This is the power of positive or negative thinking, the source of your power over yourself and over those things that come into your circle of influence.

— Ben Swett

Treasure Chest

Starting with the items in the "Treasures" exercise (page 171),

1. Make a longer and more complete list of things that are good and true and beautiful; whatever would inspire you to impartial good-will, love, joy, inner peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
2. *Uke* test.

Meditating on the good and true and beautiful is not escapist denial of "reality," whatever that may be¹. It is a means of saving up the treasures of your heart and mind. These are powerful tools in your toolbox; the real magic rings and charms. They have power over demons, those without and within.

This is not to say that all is Truth and Beauty. Denying or ignoring the fact that unpleasant realities exist only makes them stronger by forcing them into the subconscious where they are less easily reached or dealt with. Or, these things remain in consciousness but as lies — to self or to others.

This illusion is taken a step down by the cynic who declares the worst of two possibilities (and its consequences) to be "reality." To the true professional cynic, only the back end of the horse is real. But consider a cut diamond or other faceted gemstone. Which facet ("face") or point of view is the "real" one? Consider a puppy or a baby. Which end is "real?" The one which occasionally causes inconvenience? — or the one remarkable for expressing affection and delight?

The question is an absurdity. The most cuddly of babies or puppies must be fed and trained. But there is far more to a baby than the annoyance of diapers; more responsibility than chortles and hugs.

We do not get to create all reality; reality is what *is*. However, we can choose our focus, and this ability to change our point of view is our greatest power.

Acknowledge the reality and act in spite of it.

1. See Lewis, C. S. in "Resources."

Point of View

Rolling is a frightening new undertaking for students who have spent lives committed to the vertical plane. There is a tendency to go down, all the while thinking "Oh no! Oh no! Oh no!"

In Aikido, this point of view often translates into a misunderstanding of *nage* as winner and *uke* as loser. If this is a familiar difficulty, try changing your point of view to see a fall as:

- An opportunity for rolling practice.
- A back massage from the mat.
- Flying.
- A gift of energy from *uke* to help you get back up.

Night workers next door to our dojo thought us a wicked lot when they heard crashes followed by peals of hilarious laughter. One night they came to see these people who took such delight in slam-dunking their partners then laughing at them.

What they found was this: it was the ones who had just been thrown who were laughing.

Over the years I have been privileged to work with many people of capability, wisdom and good sense. "Colonel Bob" is one of the best at always managing to come up with a positive and practical point of view.

A customer complained that my database program was "crashing the system" (meaning the entire site computer network) because the network happened to go down several times while the customer was working with my database. I became impatient with the repeated calls and with what I perceived as foolish accusations.

"No," said my boss. "There is a problem. Whatever the problem may be, the customer believes that you can fix it. And knows that he gets faster response from you than from the Help Desk."

This didn't change the customer, or the technical difficulties that the LAN was experiencing, but it greatly changed my point of view—and patience.

Internal Aikido Class

Students of *Ki* Development can go through every exercise in this manual in meditation. Establish One-Point, relax, drop weight underside, and extend *ki*. Note feelings, moods.

Students of Aikido can go through Aikido techniques. Visualize the attack, see the energy, blend with the energy, perform the technique and the hold-down. You will probably find it difficult to maintain concentration for more than a few seconds but the difficulty of doing a technique for two all on your own is a test of real Aikido.

Beginners tend to see techniques as *nage* versus *uke*, a "win-lose" situation. If *nage* throws *uke*, *nage* wins and *uke* "loses." If *uke* is unthrowable, *uke* "wins" and *nage* "loses."

Not so.

Uke "wins" by being a good teacher. The test is not the ability to remain unthrowable. The test is this: Do you understand a technique well enough to guide an unfamiliar *nage* through the technique and the throw? — without the help of *nage*'s presence?

While sitting quietly and comfortably, eyes closed, without losing focus or concentration, go through:

1. An entire attack and technique.
2. A series of attacks and techniques.
3. An entire test series. (The 5th kyu test, then the 4th kyu test . . .)
 - As *nage*.
 - As *uke*.
4. If you lose concentration, go back to the beginning and start again

At the Merrifield dojo, Steve Kendall is renowned for "One-Man Taigi"; no partner, he throws himself — including the sankyo hold downs. It's great fun to watch, enormously entertaining, but it also demonstrates a profound understanding of the energy, the flow, balance, timing, and technique.

You can apply this technique to any other activity or sport such as golf — from walking onto the green to the landing and roll of the ball.

Do a dance step, play a piano piece, establish a goal and achieve it step by step, all in meditation.

Harmony and Housework

During classes at the *dojo*, shoes are neatly stored in a rack. At many more traditional schools, they are carefully placed around the mat, facing out. The *samurai* tradition required constant readiness. Inability of a warrior to respond because of a missing sandal or misplaced or faulty weapons would have been an unspeakable shame. The same goal of battle-readiness should apply to modern everyday life.

- It is inefficient to spend half an hour looking for the other shoe.
- If you are never sure of your checkbook balance, then you're never sure of your weapons, your tools, your resources.
- An effective encounter with the tax office or returns department is impossible if the records can't be located.
- Too many material things means financial slavery.
- A huge sinkful of dirty dishes harbors small enemies while making it impossible to brew a cup of tea or cook an egg.
- Poor planning and poor meals destroy health and life.

After class, the hakama is carefully folded, its pleats tucked into place and the ties intricately woven together. I folded the pleats, as this preserves the creases. But I never learned to fold the ties. Why? Because there is no "Hakama Folding Test" on the test list. Now I think that folding those ties, going through the steps, this small daily ritual of closing, is a wonderful opportunity to do just one thing right, to do it carefully, to do it well.

—CMS

Who put this book on the shelf upside-down?! There is not anything which is all right to do without presence of mind. Not noticing this kind of thing is where slackness begins

Put things back properly!

—Koichi Tohei

The Way of a Warrior, the Art of Politics, is to stop trouble before it starts. The Way of a Warrior is to establish harmony.

—Morihei Ueshiba

Each small task of everyday life is part of the total harmony of the universe.

—St. Theresa of Lisieux

The Spiritual Spectrum

Good or Evil is not an Either/Or situation. It is a spectrum of desire and behavior, a continuum ranging from kind to cruel, caring to exploitive, light to dark. These relationships hold true whether the personality is in a body, out of body, coming from the subconscious, or over the phone as sales pitch.

+

Loves all

Kind, wise, and wisely kind Trustworthy. Feeding each other. Creative. "Give, not get "

Appreciating and building on the good in self and others. Graciousness and gentleness.

Rejoicing in joys, growth, and progress of others.

Decent, sensible, self-controlled, patient, kind.

Desiring to help, to rescue, to do good

O *Ahimsa. Harmless, neutral. Neither doing harm nor desiring to do harm.*

Indifferent, uncaring, disinterested.

Self-centered, egocentric, greedy, materialistic.

Blaming, scapegoating, manipulating others for personal gain, appetite "Get, not give "

*Rejoicing in errors, faults, and failures of others
Covetous, envious, spiteful*

Fear-mongering, hate-mongering Lying, cynical, hateful, abusive, sadistic, cruel, destructive. Feeding on others, predatory, and murderous

— *Loves None*

The practice of evaluating source is "discernment." The practice of choosing source or position is "tuning." Key is attitude toward others.

Observe thoughts and desires throughout the day, whether acted on or not Where do they fit on the spiritual spectrum?

— Ben Swett

Right and Revenge

An internal visualization with *uke* testing or in groups of three, acted out by *nage* and two *ukes*.

1. With Unbendable Arm or in *seiza*, *nage* imagine being jumped by a knife-wielding attacker, applying an Aikido technique, taking control of the knife, and bringing the attacker to the ground in a gentle but effective hold-down. *Uke* test.
2. Enact the same scene, but after taking control of the knife, imagine stabbing and killing the attacker. *Uke* test.
3. Repeat while focusing on the following thoughts:
 - He deserved it.
 - This is fun.
 - This is genuinely necessary to protect another¹.



The moment of victory is too short to live for that and nothing else.

— Tennis champion Martina Navratilova

1. See Dobson's "A Kind Word Turneth Away Wrath" in Heckler (1985) for an example of an apparent desire to protect. But what was it *really*?

Dislike and Hatred

Think of your friends, acquaintances, co-workers. Some you like and admire, others you have chosen to dislike, to hold in contempt, or to hate. List these and your reasons why. What effect do these choices have on you? When you have your list, *uke* test.

To demonstrate that the effects on you originate within you and your own attitudes, try this on an inanimate object.

1. Observe an inanimate object of annoying design, such as really ugly wallpaper, a clumsy piece of furniture, an old car, a raggedy sneaker or tennis shoe.
2. Consider how ugly it is, and how much you dislike having to be associated with it. *Uke* test.
3. Change your point of view to see this item as an act of creation, clumsy perhaps, but creative; perhaps by a child or someone holding a saw for the first time. Run the tape backwards on the old car or old shoe to see all the times that it functioned as a worthy tool in work or play for its owner. *Uke* test.

On renting an apartment from an elderly lady I asked permission to pull down the peeling wallpaper to reveal the beautiful dark wood paneling underneath. Thinking she would be glad of the free handiwork, I was surprised at her hesitation and the look of regret that crossed her face when she reluctantly agreed. I asked her to tell me its story.

During the darkest days of World War II she and her best friend had spent a weekend papering that room, thinking to "brighten things up a bit."

I saw ugly fuschia wallpaper, of goofy design, an affront to my personal version of good sense and good taste.

She saw a weekend of shared work with a dear friend long dead, and light in the darkness.

While I still would not willingly choose that particular pattern for me, I could not see it quite the same way again.

Give or Get

In the sense of positive or negative orientation, "purpose" can be reduced to the desire to give or to get. What is the effect on *nage*?

In *seiza* or with Unbendable Arm, *uke* test as *nage* imagines,

1. A choice of getting or giving help:
 - Someone] must help *me*.
 - I will help [*someone*].
2. A job interview from the following perspective:
 - What can I get from the company?
 - What can I contribute to the company?

Opportunities to observe orientation of purpose are infinite and often deceptive. On the mat, an offer of instruction may appear to be an offer of help, but it may also be something else.

Giving is giving only if the other person goes away enriched. If you take pride away from them in order to feed your own view of yourself, the gift you make — even if it's hours of encouragement and support — isn't fair compensation.

— Merle Shain

Those in the military and in police organizations are particularly subject to the same temptations and opportunities.

A retired policeman commented on how many of his colleagues had burned out while he had not. What was the difference?

"Point of view," he said. "Many see 'policing' as class monitor, the one to enforce the rules and to bring the rule-breakers to justice. Or they see it as an opportunity to get a cut of the action. Truth is, there will always be an endless tide of rule-breakers. And putting your life on the line for a few more dollars under the table is not a worthwhile trade."

He saw it as an opportunity to protect his family, his street, his city and the good people in it. Not as All-Powerful Protector or Super Cop, but as organizer, helper, team builder. The best protection for a neighborhood invaded by drug dealers was for neighbors to protect one another, to watch, take notes, collect evidence, to work as a team. He taught them how, taught them well, and a neighborhood was saved.

Ahimsa

Ahimsa, "harmlessness," is a traditional discipline of yoga, but it is much more than the absence of harm or destruction. It is the absence of *desire* to harm or destroy.

Achieving *ahimsa* is achieving a neutral state, a zero point on the spiritual spectrum.

"Aw, he's harmless," is a strangely derogatory phrase commonly heard in daily life. But in the spiritual sense, *harmlessness* is no small accomplishment.

We have the opportunity to be harmless day by day, minute by minute. From there, which way?

1. Observe all the passing desires of the heart, whether these are acted upon or not.
2. Note their position on the spiritual spectrum.

Ahimsa can also be thought of as impartiality. Here is a "walking meditation" for the practice of impartiality.

On watching contests, sports events, or nature shows:

1. Cheer for one side without becoming emotional over the outcome. Enjoy the game, appreciating the good catches, good hits performed by skillful players on either side.
2. Change sides at half time.

He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain to fall on the just and the unjust. Be ye impartial as your Father in heaven is impartial.

— *Matthew 5:45, 48*

This passage is usually translated as an exhortation to be "perfect," but the preceding verses (43-47) deal throughout with non-selective goodness, kindness, and graciousness. The Greek word used is *teleioi*, meaning "complete," "mature," "fully-formed," or "not broken into parts" — or as we say in English, "impartial."

Compare with Latin *integer*, meaning "whole" or "complete," which became *integrite*, "soundness," "wholeness" — now familiar in English as *integrity*.

Keep *One-Point*.

Entoku

Entoku is "good done in secret." While it benefits the receiver, it also benefits the giver by orienting and tuning position on the spiritual spectrum.

According to the Talmud, the truest kindnesses are those done to animals as they have no means of repayment.

Entoku releases the giver from the hook of desiring feedback, adulation, payment, reward.

Acts of kindness and love may be unremembered by the doer, but they are remembered by others. These gifts and gratitude for them, stored in the minds and memories of others, are the "treasure stored up in heaven." See the review of *Miracle of Mindfulness* (Thich Nhat Hanh, 1987) for an unforgettable kindness done by a nameless old woman under the most amazing circumstances. See Conari Press (1993) for many more. What was the effect on the receiver?

*The best portions of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts,
Of kindness and love.*

— William Wordsworth

Thank You

In *seiza* or standing,

1. *Nage* think of resisting the incoming energy. *Uke* test.
2. *Nage* say "Thank you!" (and mean it!). Accept and think of the incoming energy as a gift. *Uke* test.

Aikido is also the art of "Thank you."

"Yes and yes and thank you, thank you for the opportunity to practice my Aikido!"

Practice saying "Thank you!" verbally and internally at every possible opportunity. The person who taught you to read, the unseen army that keeps water running through your pipes, all the bad things that never happened, all the people who have helped you see something you could not see for yourself.

The ability to say "Thank you" is the first step to appreciation, in turn, the first step in "The Act of Blessing" on page 185.

Appreciation

Appreciation is the action of recognizing the value and worth of persons or things — not as they might be, could be, or should be, but *as they are*.

We are told to appreciate others, to realize that everyone has special talents and abilities, but do we? I learned an unforgettable lesson about abilities, strengths, and weaknesses from a soccer game.

One of our players was difficult to appreciate in terms of standard soccer skills. She was slow, plodding, and notoriously lacking in reflexes. Various players had schemed to eject her from the team but could not because of her unfailing faithfulness and reliability. She never missed a practice, never missed a game, and always played valiantly as best she could.

Because she was slow and plodding she had to play her position and concentrate on passes rather than wandering all over the field. Because she was not sprinting here and there she never wore herself out or needed to be substituted.

"She is not an asset to the team," they said.

One day we met a team that had such a superb dribbler that they never bothered to field more than five or six players, yet they were trouncing the league. Two of our players changed that: our best one and our worst one.

Our best player ignored the feints.

Our "worst" player never even saw them — a "failing" that allowed her to consistently and reliably clear the ball while others could not.

Super Dribbler, baffled by this unexpected turn of events, was unable to adapt her strategy, and, because everything had depended on that one skill, she had no team to call on when it failed.

We won because of a completely unexpected combination of skills.

A strength that was a weakness.

A weakness that was a strength.

Good or Ill Will

This exercise and its consequences are traditionally known as "blessing" and "cursing." Always conclude this exercise on the "blessing" note.

For a group demonstration, send a volunteer out of the room while you explain the test to the group. Test as follows.

1. *Uke* test the volunteer for Unbendable Arm.
2. When Unbendable Arm has been obtained,
3. On unspoken signal, group extends ill will towards the volunteer, hope of failure, thinking of everything disliked (real or imagined) about this person. *Uke* test for Unbendable Arm.
4. On unspoken signal, group extend kindness, caring, and good will towards the volunteer. *Uke* test again for Unbendable Arm.

The volunteer *nage* may be tested while facing away from the class in order to eliminate visual clues, or facing the class to include visual clues.

Do individual demonstrations in groups of four.

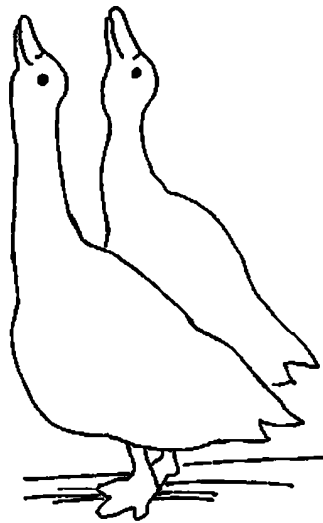
1. An *uke* and a *nage* repeat the steps above, *uke* providing the flow of ill or good will towards *nage*.
2. The two other partners test the active *uke* and *nage*.
3. Determine the following:
 - What is the effect of good or ill will on the person who receives it?
 - On the person who sends it?

The Act of Blessing

1. Stop — Get quiet and let other concerns go.
2. Observe — Focus your attention on a person, pet, or other living thing¹, either in person or as an image.
3. Appreciate — Notice the good in that being, not as you wish it to be, but as it is now.
4. Bless — Send a flow of good will towards the entity.
5. Stop — Release or reduce your caring-connection.
6. *Uke* test the blesser (and if possible, the blessed).

The connection is what makes this exercise powerful, whether it is called "extending *ki*" or "*ki* healing" or "blessing and prayer."

- Most powerful: How can we help [this person]?
- Most ineffective: "Please bless all the poor and homeless, and all the starving children in far-away countries."
- Actually harmful: Please make [name] better. (This holds the built-in assumption and image of the subject as sick. Far better to appreciate and remember the person as healthy and strong.)



1. Some interesting results came from playing with this exercise at a pond. One group therefore refers to it as "Bless A Duck" but the possibilities are limitless.

Rationale

Over the last few years, the Noble Warrior has reappeared in Aikido writings and teachings. The ideal of the Noble Warrior, pledged to serve and protect, is found throughout the world, in all places, in all times.

Always the problem has been how to keep the Noble Warrior noble.

The Noble Warrior protects loved ones from hunger, predators, or from each other, carving out a place of order, safety, and decency.

"*Budo*" said Ueshiba, "is Love." But those with the power to kill face the temptation to exchange the power of love for the love of power. They start as farmers and parents protecting family and fields. They end as surly self-important bureaucrats with swords.

For some, the only reason to stay on the upright path may be shame, fear of punishment, or doctrine. If these are removed, what reason is left? This problem is particularly poignant in current society, much of which preaches a doctrine of "anything goes" and there are no consequences. The very concept of sin or of wrongdoing has fallen badly out of popularity.

Ki testing offers a practical and testable rationale — that lives spent preying upon others, lives of spite, cynicism, and hatred, are weaker than lives of cooperation, teamwork, kindness, blessing, and joy.

Hate another and it is you who are damaged.

Bless another and it is you who are blessed and healed.

See for yourself.

Resources

CHAPTER 6 *Resources*

Books, Journals, Articles and Internet

Aikido Journal, Stanley Pranin (Editor), 2564 Wigwam Pkwy #231, Henderson, Nevada 89014 USA Phone: 702-837-7657, FAX: 413-403-0172
Website: AikiJournal.com E-mail: editor@aikidojournal.com

Aikido Today Magazine, Areté Press, P.O. Box #1060, Claremont, CA 91711-1060. Phone: (909) 624-7770, FAX: (800) 445-AIKI Website: aiki.com/ATM
E-mail: atm@aiki.com

History, culture, and practice in the world of Aikido. Interviews with Aikidoists, beginning and advanced, from around the country and the world; calendars of events, announcements, reviews of books, training tapes, and other products.

Conari Press (1993), *Random Acts of Kindness*. Conari Press.

A wonderful collection of *entoku*, “good done in secret.” Notice how often accounts appear of kindnesses done in traffic, how important and remarkable these small kindnesses were to the recipients. If nothing else, read the foreword by D. R. Kingma — then go and do likewise.

Covey, Stephen R. (1989), *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People — Restoring the Character Ethic*. Simon & Schuster, Inc.

Ki instructors talk about “living positively.” Here’s the laboratory manual or user guide on *how* to do it. Audiotapes narrated by the author are available excerpting this best-selling book. The subtitle refers to Covey’s survey of 200 years of American “success literature.” That written during the first hundred years of this country was based upon character and ethics — integrity, honesty, and reliability. He found success literature written during the past 50 years to be quite different. Also available on audiotape.

Crum, Thomas F. (1987), *The Magic of Conflict*. Simon & Schuster, Inc.

Conflict from a most unusual point of view — not as a negative to be overcome, but as a positive and active opportunity for creation.

Dobson, Terry, and Miller, Victor (1987), *Aikido in Everyday Life — Giving in to Get Your Way*. North Atlantic Books.

Could easily be subtitled: “Suzette Elgin Meets Morihei Ueshiba.” Aikido *off* the mat and dealing with conflict and harmony in, yes, the most

everyday events of everyday life, from breakfast to boardroom to PTA and bedtime for the kids. Translates aggression and defense into the visible realm through the imagery of triangle, circle, square. A Hard Truth: because most attacks and assaults are non-physical, physical responses (throws and blows to the overbearing boss or annoying co-worker) are in the realm of fantasy. Here's how to deal with real life. See Elgin, Suzette for superb treatment of "verbal assault." See the movie *Grand Canyon* for an outstanding example of triangle, circle, square defense.

The first edition of this book was published in 1977 when *Winning Through Intimidation* and *Taking Care of Number One* topped the best-seller lists. "The art of Aikido was virtually unknown outside of Japan," noted Dobson, "and the idea that precepts deriving from a martial art (much less a martial art devoted to peace) could illuminate the conduct of one's daily affairs was too radical a notion for most publishers to consider seriously. Add to that Aikido's insistence on responsibility for the protection of one's adversary and it seems an absolute miracle the book got published when it did." Invaluable. For insights on the late great Terry Dobson himself, see Heckler (1985).

Ebert, Roger (1994), *Ebert's Little Movie Glossary — A Compendium of Movie Clichés, Stereotypes, Obligatory Scenes, Hackneyed Formulas, Shopworn Conventions, and Outdated Archetypes*: Andrews and McMeel

Do you or your children believe what you see on TV or in the movies? Here's the hilarious antidote.

Elgin, Suzette Haden (1989), *Success with the Gentle Art of Verbal Self-Defense* Prentice Hall.

_____(1987), *The Last Word on the Gentle Art of Verbal Self-Defense*: Prentice Hall

_____(1980), *The Gentle Art of Verbal Self-Defense*: Prentice Hall.

On the mat we learn to recognize a physical attack for what it is and respond appropriately. Here is Aikido applied to verbal and emotional attacks which are far more common than mere *physical* attack and far more difficult to deal with as training is so rare. The phrase "on the street" as commonly heard and interpreted in martial arts classes is usually nonsense — the real battlegrounds are in the shop, the office, the boardroom, the kitchen, the bedroom, the bar, the beltway. The weapons are words and their underlying attitudes, against which physical techniques are wildly inappropriate or impossible.

Elgin provides rare and valuable training in the tools and the ethics of their use. Compare the linguistic concept of "matching Satir modes" with the Aikido concept of matching speed and direction, blending with the partner or attacker before actual execution of a technique. There are more books in this series, all excellent and uniquely valuable. She talks Virginia Satir and family relationships but you may hear Lady Jessica and the Bene

Gessert training from Frank Herbert's *Dune* See also Dobson, 1987.

Fazzioli, E. (1986), *Chinese Calligraphy*. Abbeville Press.

A delightful and informative text for anyone wishing to understand more about Chinese ideograms (the source of Japanese *kanji* such as the *ki*, *qi*, or *chi* symbol), their history and development.

Frankl, Viktor (1984), *Man's Search for Meaning — An Introduction to Logotherapy*. Simon & Schuster, Inc.

The definitive treatise on changing one's point of view. The idea of changing one's point of view from fear to "Thank you for the opportunity to practice my Aikido" is extremely frightening to some "That's impossible!" cried one student — and left. It is quite possible Psychologist Viktor Frankl did it in a Nazi concentration camp

We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken away from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms — to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.

Franklin, Eric (1996) *Dynamic Alignment Through Imagery*. Human Kinetics

— (1996) *Dance Imagery for Technique and Performance* Human Kinetics

The imagery and imagination involved in *ki* exercises strikes many as strange ("unreal!") Yet it is an increasingly critical part of dance and professional sports where new ideas, research and innovation tend to be more welcome than in the traditional martial arts. Franklin reviews the body-mind connection, anatomy, and a wealth of imagery exercises Website. www.humankinetics.com

Friday, Karl F (1997), *Legacies of the Sword—the Kashima-Shinryu and Martial Culture*. University of Hawai'i Press.

Besides a superb review of Japanese sword tradition, contains an excellent description of breath control and the tradition and training of *kiai*. See page 86 for the story of Seki Humitake, the current Kashima-Shinryu *shihan* and his encounter with a black bear while armed only with his voice.

Fritz, Robert (1989), *The Path of Least Resistance* Fawcett Columbine.

On becoming the creative force in your own life. Why tackling a problem with grim determination and willpower may not be the best solution There is a newer edition; this one is more terse.

Fulghum, Robert (1988), *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*. Villard Books.

If you are having trouble making your list of things "good, or true, or beautiful," they're all here, from universal spirit and doing good in secret, to the 145th reincarnation of the Haiho Lama into the body of shoemaker

Elias Schwartz through an error in the cosmic switching yards. Excerpted on audio tape.

— (1989), *It Was On Fire When I Lay Down On It*. Villard Books.

More of the above but even better. The story of Alexander Papaderos, the man with a mirror and an answer to the eternal question “What is the Meaning of Life?” is especially wise and beautiful.

Gluck, Jay (1996), *Zen Combat — and the Secret Power Called Ki*. Personally Oriented

The late Jay Gluck was the author of “Masters of the Bare Hand Kill,” the 1957 *True* magazine article that introduced karate to America. The article was expanded to become the karate chapter of the original (1962) edition of *Zen Combat*. He was invited to photograph Ueshiba for a similar article on Aikido, but when *True* editors saw the resulting photos of American military police, karate blackbelts, and sword-wielding *kendoka*, all “looking everywhere but at the little old target,” they rejected the photos as “posed” or “rigged.” See his account of writing *Zen Combat in Aikido Journal* #109 (vol 23, no. 4, 1996). “Modern Zen Fools” is the encounter between Morihei Ueshiba and cartoonist/engineer Rube Goldberg. Priceless for charm, wit, and an early account of 20th-century martial arts.

Heckler, Richard Strozzi (Ed.) (1985), *Aikido and the New Warrior*. Frog Ltd.

A treasury of essays on Aikido, including the late Terry Dobson’s wrenching short story about “real Aikido.” In “A Kind Word Turneth Away Wrath” he tells of leaving the train feeling ashamed and humbled. I felt ashamed and humbled just reading the story. Terry describes his then-self as an “arrogant jock.” Those who studied with him later report that the constant refrain of this immensely strong, powerful man was “Gently! Softly!” See also Dobson (1987).

— (1984), *The Anatomy of Change — East/West Approaches to Body/Mind Therapy*. Shambhala Publications.

Essays on Aikido applied to all facets of daily life. Practice on the mat is only one small part.

Hyams, Joe (1982), *Zen in the Martial Arts*. Bantam Books, Inc.

Essays on fundamentals of the martial arts and *budo* — a Lessons-Learned Report by a student of the late Bruce Lee. Ueshiba was rooted in Shinto which shares common threads with Buddhism, Christianity, and the teachings of the old yogis. The Great Truths are universal.

Heyerdahl, Thor (1989) *Easter Island — The Mystery Solved*. Random House

An illustrated summary of Heyerdahl’s investigations on Easter Island including the 1986 demonstration of a 30-ton statue “walking” thanks to basic physics — and One-Point

Internet Addresses and Resources for Aikido

The Official Ki Society Website for the United States strives for updated

Ki Society dojo addresses and information.

Ki Aikido USA, PO Box 75433, Seattle WA 98125-0433 206-527-2151
voice / 206-522-8702 Fax. Website: <http://ki-aikido.net> E-mail:
contact@ki-aikido.net

Jun Akiyama's Aikiweb includes such gems as Japanese language glossary with audio files for proper pronunciation, dojo finder, reviews of books, materials, training tips You will also find instructions for subscribing to Aikido-L, a world-wide cyberdojo of Aikido enthusiasts See <http://www.aikiweb.com>

Kjartan Clausen's Aikido FAQ website is at <http://aikidofaq.com>

The Virginia Ki Society offers training notes, books, and other materials: <http://vakisociety.org>

For a very different point of view on internal martial arts, a conservative warning site is at:

<http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/crj/crj-jrnl/crj0167a.txt>

Lewis, C. S. (1982), *The Screwtape Letters* Macmillan Publishing Co , Inc.

Advice from a Senior Devil to a Junior Temptor on capturing human souls. This classic gem provides a different premise and point of view (about 180 degrees) off the norm. Here, the usually garrulous C. S. Lewis is relatively terse and to-the-point. In Aikido, beginners typically spend about six months or so huddling together over after-class beers debating whether or not *ki* is "real." If you're having this problem, see letters I and XXX for a pungent review of the peculiar human concept of "reality."

Millman, Dan (1984), *The Way of the Peaceful Warrior*. H. J. Kramer.

Whether it is fact or fiction is irrelevant; it has insights

Peck, M. Scott (1983), *People of the Lie — The Hope for Healing Human Evil*. Simon and Schuster.

A best-seller that many bought but few have read. I know of many people and groups who set out to read it but "couldn't get through it" because it was "too disturbing." It is indeed disturbing, a treatise on the existence, nature, and properties of Evil. A current popular notion is that Evil does not exist, in part, a problem of terminology. Peck provides an invaluable working psychological definition. Evil is "that which seeks to kill life or liveliness." It is the opposite of Good, "that which promotes life and liveliness."

— (1978), *The Road Less Traveled — A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values, and Spiritual Growth* Simon and Schuster.

Love and *pacifism* have both suffered strange perversions of meaning in our society. For a discussion of true kindness and love, Dr. Peck's chapters on what love *is* and what love *is not* are unequalled. These alone are worth the price of the book which has been on a best-seller list at some time during every year since it was first published. Read this, then see Saotome

(1993). These two books are the antidote to the parallel delusions of *love* as “warm fuzzy feeling” or “doormat,” and to *pacifism* as “doormat” or “dead.”

Reed, William (1986), *Ki — A Practical Guide for Westerners*. Japan Publications, Inc.

Ki is a foreign concept to many Americans. Reed uses familiar terms and a wealth of example and commentary to explain Japanese traditions including *ki* principles and exercises, the tea ceremony, calligraphy, and *Noh* drama, and their relationship to Aikido and the martial arts

____ (1992), *Ki — A Road That Anyone Can Walk*. Japan Publications, Inc.

From the history of Koichi Tohei and Ki Society International, to *ki* in business and daily life. Includes commentary on philosophy, healing, and daily disciplines.

There is also a delightful selection of Japanese- and Chinese-style poetry (some intended to be chanted to folk tunes while training with a staff), and a collection of *Ki* Sayings from Master Tohei, here presented in English translation for the first time.

Saotome, Mitsugi (1993), *Aikido and the Harmony of Nature*. Shambhala Publications, Inc

Contains history and anecdotes of Aikido founder Morihei Ueshiba, Saotome was one of his live-in students (*uchi-deshi*). Ranges from the ideals of honor and service in the *samurai* tradition, to the elements of “reality,” wave-forms, gravity, and spirituality. These concepts are woven into the descriptions of individual Aikido techniques. Excellent

____ (1989), *The Principles of Aikido*. Shambhala Publications, Inc.

A treasury of Aikido philosophy and techniques. Particularly remarkable for the chapters on “The Sword” and “Ukemi.” If you are caught in the common delusion of *nage* as “winner” and *uke* as “loser,” this will help you see *ukemi* (giving attacks and taking falls) as discipline and art in its own right.

Shifflett, C. M. (2000), *Aikido Exercises for Teaching and Training*. Round Earth Publishing.

Emphasizes the physical aspects of Aikido training: safe rolling, basic pins and throws, tools and toys for demonstrating and practicing with a partner or alone. Includes additional *ki* exercises with commentary on the underlying physics. There is also an extensive essay by linguist Suzette Elgin on the tools and techniques behind the critical but seldom-taught Martial Art of Verbal Self-Defense. But See Elgin herself.

Stone, John and Meyer, Ron, Eds (1989), *Aikido in America*. Frog, Ltd., P.O. Box 12327, Berkeley, CA, 330 p.

Interviews with two generations of American Aikidoists from Terry Dobson to the late George Simcox. A wonderful collection of observations by those who studied under or observed *O-Sensei* in action

Note correct spellings for the following names: Imaizumi, Kashiwaya, Maruyama (p 180), Clyde = Clyde Takeguchi (p 184), Sorenson = Swarens (p 178), Lorraine Deann = Lorraine Diann (p 126), Sumio Toyota = Fumio Toyada (p 179), Tacoma = Takoma Park (p 192). —R. Nisley

Stevens, John (1984), *Aikido — The Way of Harmony*: Shambhala Publications Inc.

Biographies of the Founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba, and of Shirata Rinjiro, the author's instructor. Detailed analysis of Aikido techniques including such basics as proper bowing, sitting, standing, breathing. *Aikikai*-style terms are slightly different from those used in the style of *Shin-Shin-Toitsu Aikido*. Extensive photographs.

Tegner, Bruce (1982), *Self-Defense Nerve Centers and Pressure Points for Karate, Jujitsu and Atemi-waza*. Thor Publishing Co.

Thich Nhat Hanh (Mobi Ho, Trans.) (1987), *The Miracle of Mindfulness — A Manual on Meditation*: Beacon Press.

On becoming aware. This man and his followers were persecuted in their native Viet Nam because they insisted on tending the wounded, suffering, and dying — regardless of which side they had fought on. In "Random Acts of Kindness" (see Conari Press, 1993) there is a haunting story told by an American who was wounded during an attack on a Vietnamese village. As he lay helpless in his blood, an old woman approached and gave him — not the final blow he expected but — a cup of tea. Then she quietly went her way.

Tohei, Koichi and Shinojima, Sabi (2003), *Kiatzu*: Japan Publications.

Kiatzu techniques, application of *ki* to healing. Detailed descriptions and explanations of the "Ki Exercise for Health," "The One-ness Taiso" and other exercises.

— (1978), *Ki in Daily Life*. Kodansha International.

I was pleased to have read this book just for the commentary on the Japanese phrase *suisei-mushi*, meaning "to be born drunk and to die while still dreaming."

— (1976), *Book of Ki — Coordinating Mind and Body in Daily Life*: Japan Publications, Inc.

From training body, mind, and soul to raising a golf handicap. Contains exercises and an introduction to *kiatzu*, a method of healing with *ki*.

Ueshiba, Kisshomaru (1987), *The Spirit of Aikido*: Kodansha International

The late Kisshomaru Ueshiba was the son of Morihei Ueshiba, Founder of Aikido, and the head of Aikikai. Presents a detailed review of the underlying philosophy of Aikido and its pre-WWII history.

Walker, Jearl (1985), *Roundabout — The Physics of Rotation in the Everyday World* [Readings from "The Amateur Scientist" in *Scientific American*]: W. H.

Freeman & Co.

Westbrook, A., and Ratti, O. (1970), *Aikido and the Dynamic Sphere — An Illustrated Introduction*. Charles E. Tuttle Company.

I first saw this book in a martial arts supply store where I had gone to purchase a wooden practice sword. Near the door was a wide selection of video tapes, featuring snarling bloody actors and titles such as *The Art of Killing*. A mannikin in black *ninja* uniform, armed to the teeth, stood by a poster advertising classes in the “secrets of Japan’s professional assassins.” The counter at back held throwing stars, daggers, spikes, steel claws, and a warning that these could not be sold to anyone under 18 without parental permission. The store clerks themselves didn’t look that old. I found the only book on Aikido in the entire store, and opening it at random, found this line: “*If you harm your opponent unnecessarily, you have failed.*” It’s an excellent book, but on that day I would have bought it just for that one sentence.

This is *the* textbook on Aikido, so widely used that in 1994 it was in its 42nd printing; in 1984 I bought the 27th printing. Besides an extensive essay on the ethics of martial arts, the authors delve into every aspect of the art. Sections address such topics as “Immobilization No. 1 Against Attack No. 3” but the Japanese names that we use are supplied in the glossary. Reading it is difficult for a beginner; it was two years before the technique instructions made sense to me, partly due to stylistic differences, largely due to names. See Shifflett (2000) for a chart that “translates” the numbering system into Japanese terms more commonly used in *Aikikai* and Ki Society schools.

It is invaluable for the superb line-drawings which emphasize the circular motions. These drawings enjoy the dubious honor of being the most-plagiarized illustrations in the history of martial arts. If you have seen a beautiful, flowing line-drawing of an Aikido throw or *jo-kata* on a poster or advertisement, chances are excellent that it came from this book.

Zi, Nancy (1986), *The Art of Breathing*. Bantam Books.

Thirty exercises (with visualizations) for improved breathing. In Aikido, as in yoga and other arts, breathing is a discipline in and of itself. The idea is this: If you can’t control your own breathing, you control nothing.

Movies and Videos

In the end, what matters are the songs and stories of heroes told to little children around the campfire.

— Plato, *The Republic*

Lists of movies and videos related to Aikido or *ki* tend to emphasize the Japanese *samurai* tradition while others emphasize physical skills while preaching values of the worst possible kind. This list includes works which would not, at first glance, be associated with Aikido, but which demonstrate Aikido principles if only in a few key scenes.

The internal principles of Aikido are not limited to certain geographic settings, equipment, plots, or actors. They are universal. If they are to be developed at all they must be observed, considered, practiced, and developed in daily life. While most movies and videos here are fictional, the ideas behind them and the people who choose to convey these particular ideas are quite real.¹ Observe the underlying purpose and intent

¹ Beginners often ask: "Who's your favorite martial artist?" Mine is a retired Air Force colonel, but what they usually mean is "which movie star?" Well, OK, Colonel Potter of "M.A.S.H." I've learned a lot from that fictional character and the writers who created him. Most "martial arts" characters can kick and punch, but neither they nor the producers behind them seem to have a clue as to how to live or the consequences involved once the fight scene is over and the money has been collected.

Bad Day at Black Rock

Classic tale by John Sturges, director of *The Great Escape* and *The Magnificent Seven*. By merely appearing unannounced and unexpected, a mild-mannered stranger (Spencer Tracey) sends a small town with a dark secret into a frenzy of suspicion and fear. A story of choices: the shame and guilt of having made the wrong ones, the terror and opportunity of a second chance. Includes a short scene of karate versus the classic Western bully filmed in 1954 when karate was still a rare and exotic oriental art. See Gluck, 1996.

Clean and Sober

Facing drug and murder charges, real-estate hotshot Daryl Poynter (Michael Keaton) decides that a drug clinic, with its guarantee of complete anonymity, would be the perfect hideout — and is in for a big surprise. While this appears to be a movie about *drug* addiction, it is actually about *addiction* in its endless variety, whether to external sources or internal ones, whether material goods, alcohol, sex, food, self-image or the desire to prey on or to control others to hide one's own lack of self-control. Consider the different images of car headlights presented at the beginning of the film and at the very end. Morgan Freeman as a drug counselor and M. Emmet Walsh as an Alcoholics Anonymous counselor can't be fooled because they've been there themselves and already know all the lies.

The Firm

One of the few modern movies, including martial arts and others, where the protagonist uses his head rather than just punching or running. A mysterious law firm spins a web of easy money and material things. No one has ever escaped until neophyte lawyer Mitch McDeere finds a way out via negotiation, a small but powerful weapon of the law — and the price of a postage stamp. The FBI investigator, wanting something a bit more dramatic is incredulous, yet "it's more than you had on Al Capone," points out McDeere. Dramatic and bombastic not necessary — just what works. An excellent performance by Gene Hackman as a lonely man who wishes he had done better — and does.

A Force More Powerful

On effective peaceful resistance. It is often said that Ghandi's non-violent tactics were all very fine against the British who had a tradition of restraint but they would never have worked against the Nazis, communist troops, or violent dictators. Indeed they have done exactly that. Here is the history of the Nazi invasion of Denmark, the Polish Solidarity movement, the defeat of dictator Pinochet in Chili in 1983, and others. A gripping two-part video with companion book. Written and produced by Steve York. To order call 1-800-343-4727.

Website. <http://www.pbs.org/weta/forcemorepowerful>.

Grand Canyon

A strange and beautiful look at violence, real and imaginary, the interrelationships between lives and the things that actually matter. In the beginning moments of this film you will see a great Aikido Master working as a towtruck driver (Danny Glover). Watch what he does and how he does it then compare his actions with Terry Dobson's diagrams for attack and defense. (See Dobson, 1987.) Another haunting scene is Steve Martin's portrayal of a movie maker exploiting the lucrative genre of make-believe violence; after a real mugging he sees the light — then chooses to walk back into the darkness.

The Great Escape

Based on a true story of Allied prisoners of war who tunnelled out of a German prison camp. Of the 75 escapees, those who got into gun battles at the rail stations, punched out guards, stole bombers and other dramatic solutions, never made it out. This is the source of the famous scene (and poster) of Steve McQueen fruitlessly attempting to elude Nazi pursuers via motorcycle stunts. (Legend has it that he refused to make the movie unless allowed to film this bravura sequence.)

Who actually escaped? Only three: two who posed as harmless fishermen and one on a bicycle, all with a firm goal but who moved so calmly and gently that they never aroused the suspicions of watching soldiers. Also notice the character and behavior of the camp commandant and those under his command in contrast to more modern portrayals of German troops. See *Schindler's List*.

Groundhog Day

A charming remake of the legend of the Flying Dutchman of folklore with a kinder, gentler, wiser ending. The profoundly unlovable and unloving Bill Murray is trapped within the same day, apparently doomed to live it over and over — forever. What would you do if you could live forever? What would you do if no one knew? How long before money, manipulation, and preying on others becomes very very boring? What counts? What's next?

Morihei Ueshiba & Aikido — Takemusu Aiki

Scenes of O-Sensei filmed between 1952 and 1958. Includes the "flying" *sudori* described on page 92 and the famous scene of American MPs filmed by Jay Gluck and described in *Zen Combat*. Available from *Aikido Journal*

Pat and Mike

Spencer Tracy and Katherine Hepburn in a classic film example of how attitude (and patronizing or thinly veiled disapproval) can impact performance. Hepburn does a passable *shiho-nage* on tough-guy Charles Buchinski (before he became tough-guy Charles Bronson).

Police Academy 6

See "Soundman's" battle with a bad guy. OK, it's the Keystone Cops and it's a cartoon, but consider the idea of "Thank you for the opportunity to practice my Aikido" with a slightly different emphasis: "Thank you for the opportunity to practice my sound effects." Either way, the emphasis is *not* on the attacker.

Powers of Ten

A breathtaking change in point of view. A man dozes on a picnic blanket in lake-side Chicago. Every ten seconds we are ten times further out from our starting point until our galaxy is only a distant glimmer of light. The viewpoint then returns to the man's hand at the rate of 10 times more magnification every ten seconds, ending within a proton of a carbon atom. The Films of Charles & Ray Eames, Volume 1 The video is \$39.95 from Pyramid Film & Video, 2801 Colorado Avenue, Santa Monica, CA 90404, 1-(800) 421-2304.

Royal Wedding

Thin plot, but the source of the famous scene in which Fred Astair dances with a hatrack. As always he makes his partner look very very good. No clash Only blending and flowing. Consider this in dealing with *uke*.

Sanjuro (Director: Akira Kurosawa, 1962)

A rollicking tale of feudal Japan. In this sequel to *Yojimbo*, a gruff and rough wandering *samurai* (Toshiro Mifune) comes to the aid of a band of naive and hopelessly idealistic young noblemen. The young men see only yes and no, black and white, and are sorely disappointed in a wise old uncle who was taking a quieter, gentler path. In their impatience they are determined to deal with every situation in a dramatic haste which ultimately results in death and destruction.

Mifune highlights the contrast between explosive action and relaxation, appropriate action and appropriate inaction, the dangers of seeing everything in black or white, judging by surface appearances, and how insistence on Action Hero Solutions lead to tragic ends. Notice how *Sanjuro* deals with (or attempts to deal with) his former foe in the final scene.

When enemy soldiers come to ambush the Boy Scout *samurai* where they have met at a secluded shrine, Mifune drives them down the steps, surely the inspiration for a strikingly similar picture in Westbrook and Ratti's *Aikido and the Dynamic Sphere*. The scene of the young men emerging from under the floorboards reappears in Lucas' *Star Wars* when Han Solo, Obi-Wan Kenobi, and Luke Skywalker emerge from under the floorboards of the *Millenium Falcon*, following almost identical advice from a seasoned warrior that there are many ways to fight. Note also the trademark screen wipes which Lucas (an enthusiastic Kurosawa fan) used in *Star Wars*, in turn inspired by Kurosawa's *Hidden Fortress*.

Schindler's List

Nazis and World War II German soldiers are the all-purpose bad guys, the monsters we love to hate. Our memories revolve around the innocents destroyed by gas and guns. Forgotten are the other casualties, the soldiers themselves, many forced or deceived into taking part in a great wrong. In a final scene of this powerful movie, news is received that Germany has surrendered. The war is over, but now the *Schindlerjuden* face the prospect of being shot down in mass by their former guards.

Schindler saves not only his workers but the soldiers too, by presenting them with what may have been their first real choice in many years — to give in to the temptation of murder and vengeance and the destruction of their own souls, or, to simply stop, to return to their homes with clean hands, as men, not as murderers.

"Behold!" says God.

"I have set before you the way of Good and the way of Evil.

The way of Life and the way of Death.

Choose Life!"

The Shawshank Redemption

To redeem is defined in part as: "To recover ownership of something through payment of a sum, to fulfill a pledge, to set free, rescue or ransom."

A financial planner (Tim Robbins) is wrongly condemned for life to Shawshank Prison for murdering his wife. The experienced inmates bet that this quiet man will crack the first night. Not only does he not crack, ever, but in the course of a secret 20-year goal he starts a library, an education program, and groundwork to rescue the prison from the control of a sadistic warden. Red (Morgan Freeman) on his way to die, keeps a pledge that enables his friend to save his life, enables Red to choose life.

While this movie appears at first to be about surviving the rigors of prison, it is actually about goals, and soft, gentle, persistent progress towards those goals, blooming where you're planted, and life — any life — as an act of creation.

The Seven Samurai

Most wars have been fought over who gets to keep the food the farmers grow. In Greco-Roman mythology, Mars, the god of war, was originally a god of agriculture. This practical need to protect the crops is also the root of the Japanese *samurai* and of martial arts from other lands. (Note that *numchuks*, which we know only as a martial arts weapon, are actually a farm tool for threshing rice. (See Disney's *Three Musketeers* for a brief glimpse of the European version, the flail, used in threshing grain as d'Artagnon gallops through a farm village. See *Braveheart* for the same farm tool used as a weapon.) In the classic film by Akira Kurosawa a

village hires seven *samurai* (with a youthful Toshiro Mifune as a would-be *samurai*) for protection against the annual harvest-time raiders. In the test set for selecting candidates, observe who wins and why.

Seven Samurai, regularly found in the list of the world's Top Ten Movies, inspired Hollywood's "Magnificent Seven" cast as a western, director John Sturges seems to have carefully matched the faces and personalities of the original Japanese actors.

Side Kicks

An asthmatic youth lost in a fantasy world is taken in hand by the canny and kindly Mr Lee (Mako) who leads him out of the trap of fantasy into the world of real competence, true confidence, and genuine self-control. All the elements of the standard martial arts movie are here: good guy, bad guy, the opportunity to "take revenge" on one's opponent by beating him to a pulp — and they are all slyly lampooned and redirected.

The enemy is not really the class bully, it is asthma. The karate competition is won not by trashing an adversary but by "breaking," an exercise in concentration and self-control. The beautiful girl is not the prize won by defeat of a rival; she already liked him anyway — for himself. And "don't need karate *gi*," points out Mr. Lee (who races from kitchen to competition in an apron) "to break blocks."

Chuck Norris' all-time best movie pokes gentle fun at all his others. While it suggests the value of hero-worship for setting direction and goals (the boy in the final scene gave me goosebumps), emphasis is firmly placed on the need to move beyond.

The Star Wars Trilogy

Based on the 1958 *Hidden Fortress*, a film by Japanese director Akira Kurosawa. Lucas saw it in film school and never forgot it. Toshiro Mifune is general Rokurota Makabe, who in "Star Wars" becomes Obi-wan Kenobi, Princess Yukihiime becomes Princess Leia Organa, and the two hapless wandering foot soldiers who come to the rescue of the disguised princess become C3PO and R2D2. The Source of the Force.

Star Wars. Many of the concepts attributed to "The Force" come directly from Aikido. Darth Vader's hissing breath is a wonderful parody of *ki* breathing and his helmet is the traditional *samurai* helmet and bamboo armor reinterpreted in black plastic. (See the movie *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* for an example of the almost-real thing worn by the wicked Shredder.) Observe Ben Kenobi's calm and impartial graciousness to all, even the despised 'droids, in contrast to the generally spiteful and frenetic behavior of almost all other main characters. (This same character of calm graciousness is displayed by Master Splinter, the *ninja* rat in *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*.)

An Aikido joke in circulation since this 1977 movie is that "The Force" — one side light, one side dark, that "binds the universe together" —

actually refers to duct tape.

The Empire Strikes Back: Who has Luke destroyed when he strikes down his enemy in the cave? The inspiration for Yoda is believed to be Misao Shoji of Gardena, California. A superb Aikidoist, he is also renowned for his pixilated sense of humor. His favorite song, "Found A Peanut," is sure to be sung in the course of any workshop where he is present.

Return of the Jedi: On video and in slow motion, watch the clash between Vader and Emperor where you will see X-ray images largely invisible at normal film speed. Compare with Saotome's(1993) account of experience as Ueshiba's uke.

Ukemi: The Art of Falling: Bruce Bookman

Falls are a leading cause of accidental death and injury yet safe falling is rarely taught. Even in Aikido and Judo where falling is a critical technique and teaching skill, it is rarely taught in a systematic manner. Bruce Bookman corrects that lack with two well-done videotapes.

Volume 1: Basic Ukemi progresses from simple rocking chair rolls to breakfalls. Includes strategies for improving *ukemi* by effective blending with your partner.

Volume 2: Advanced Ukemi continues to high-flying breakfalls and flips.

Watch these then compare with the falls seen in "pro-wrestling." See "Exposed! Pro-Wrestling's Greatest Secrets."

Weapons of the Spirit

A documentary of a little French town of pacifist Huguenots that spent the years of World War II rescuing fugitive Jews. We hear and dwell much on the perversion of good by evil; here is a stunning example of the perversion of evil by good. Written and directed by Pierre Sauvage who was born in the town during his parents' sojourn there. Available from Friends of Le Chambon Foundation, 8033 Sunset Blvd, #784-R, Los Angeles, CA 90046 or call (213) 650-1774.

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Afterword

We hope you have found this Sampler useful and helpful.

To see these exercises in Real Life, visit us at:

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Website: <http://vakisociety.org>

. . . or check Appendix A for a dojo near you.

If you have comments or corrections, or if you have an exercise or illustrative anecdote that you would like to share for possible inclusion in future editions, please write me at:

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E-Mail: CMS@round-earth.com

All additions will be gratefully acknowledged.

— C. M. Shifflett

Appendix A

Ki Society Dojos

Ki in Aikido

Ki Society Dojos

The following is a list of schools of *Ki Aikido*. Those in bold type and starred have Chief Instructors recognized by the *Ki* Society International in Tokyo, Japan. Many have outreach programs at other locations.

For current information, contact:

Ki Aikido USA, P. O. Box 75433, Seattle, WA

98125-0433 Phone: 206-527-2151 FAX: 206-522-8702

Website: Ki-Aikido.net E-mail: contact@Ki-Aikido.net

United States

Arizona

Arizona Ki Society*

P. O. Box 13285

Scottsdale, AZ 85267

Attn: Kirk Fowler

7845 E. Evans Road, Suite F

Scottsdale, AZ 85260

Phone: (602) 991-6467

dojo@azkiaikido.com <http://www.azkiaikido.com>

California

Northern California Ki Society*

2414 Sixth Street

Berkeley, CA 94710

Attn: Pietro Yuji Maida

Phone: (510) 848-3437 FAX: (510) 848-1327

intoku@aol.com <http://www.kiaikido.org>

California

Southern California Ki Society*

P. O. Box 3752

Gardena, CA 90247

Attn: Clarence Chinn

Phone: (310) 370-1956

Info@socalkisociety.com <http://socalkisociety.org>

Southern California Ki Society

5369 Berkeley Road

Santa Barbara, CA 93111

Attn: Steve Ota

Phone: (805) 967-3101 FAX: (805) 967-5459

<http://orgs.sa.ucsb.edu/aikido>

Colorado

Rocky Mountain Ki Society

P. O. Box 11191

Denver, CO 80211

Attn: Russell Jones

Phone: (303) 425-0988

<http://www.kiaikidocolorado.org>

Westminster Dojo Headquarter Dojo

Metro Denver

Kevin Eva

9038 Marshall Ct

Westminster, CO 80031

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RMKIS@aol.com

Denver Ki-Aikido
Susan Chandler
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sechand@qwest.net

Boulder Ki-Aikido
Abel Villacorta & Jill Miyamoto
c/o Karate America
2870 Bluff Street
Boulder CO 80301
Phone: 303-448-0527
abel.villacorta@aikidoki.net

Ki-Aikido at CSU Fort Collins
Russell Smith
Colorado State University, Recreational Sports
Fort Collins, CO 80523
Phone: (970) 491-6359
ki@fort-aikido.com

Hawaii

Honolulu Ki Society
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Phone: 808-521-3513

Hawaii Ki Federation

www.hawaliki.org

Head: Christopher Curtis

Oahu

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kfarms@hgea.org

George Dochin
Box 652
Kamuela, HI 96743
gdochin@gte.net <http://www.washingtonp>

Illinois **Chicago Ki Society***
7721 South Luella
Chicago, IL 60649
Attn: Jonathan Eley
Phone: 312-721-9006
<http://www.geocities.com/tedehara/about.htm>

Indiana Bloomington Ki Aikido
Sharon Minsuk
Phone: 812-824-7038
sminsuk@bio.indiana.edu

Kansas Kansas Ki Society
PO Box 236
Lawrence, KS 66044
Attn: Andrew Tsubaki
(785) 843-8419
info@kansaskiakido.org
<http://www.idir.net/~demian/kks/>

	Midland Ki Aikido Society* 9303 Johnson Drive Shawnee Mission, KS 66222 Attn: H. Vic Montgomery Phone: (913) 362-7314 KCAikido@att.net http://www.kckiaikido.com/
Maryland	Montgomery County Ki-Aikido Society* 4511 Bestor Road Rockville, MD 20853 Attn: Daniel E. Frank Phone: (301) 871-9155 http://marylandklsociety.org/
Minnesota	Minnesota Ki Society Lyndberg Athletic Center Hopkins High School 2400 Lindbergh Drive Minnetonka, MN 55305 Attn: Jerry Kelly 612-988-4500 sudori@aol.com http://members.aol.com/sudori/
Missouri	St. Louis Ki Society* 6006 Pershing Avenue St. Louis, MO 63112 Attn: Mark Rubbert Phone: (314) 726-5070 http://www.stiki.org/
Nevada	Las Vegas (So. Cal. Ki Society) Cambridge Community Center Clark County Parks and Recreation (CCPR) 3930 Cambridge Street Las Vegas NV, 89109 Attn: Wayne Tsuma
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Appendix B

Additional Exercises

The Three-Minute Ki Exercise for Health

Classes often begin with the Three-Minute Exercise For Health.

It is intended to warm and loosen the muscles and to practice mind-body coordination. You should be able to pass a *ki* test done at any point during any of the exercises.

All exercises emphasize a gentle stretch rather than force or compression. For instance, in tilting the head forward and back, think of stretching the front of the neck rather than concentrating on forcing the back of your head into your shoulders.

Although count and motion may often appear to occur simultaneously, the count comes first, then the motion. This is the same concept as waiting for an attack, then responding to it. For *shokyu* and *chukyu* tests the examiner will call the count; for *jokyu* (*ki* test for first *kyu*) the examinee calls the count. Exercises must be done correctly and in the proper sequence.

All movements begin on the left. One common problem is doing the exercise in the prescribed three minutes, 12 seconds. Although most students tend to race through it, it is actually rather leisurely, one second per motion. When you practice at home, time yourself to be sure of the pace and be sure to relax between motions.

The musically inclined may notice that the exercise is in simple 4/4 time: each component takes 16 beats (4 measures). Try humming along with a low, leisurely *Jingle Bells* (where "sleigh" is the transition point) or other tune in 4/4 time.

For detailed instructions for this and the One-ness Taiso Exercise, see Tohei (2003).

The Three-Minute KI Exercise for Health

Torso

1. Torso turning
2. Side bends
3. Bending backward and forward
4. Shoulder blade stretch

Neck

5. Tilting head from side to side
6. Tilting head forward and back
7. Looking from side to side

Legs

8. Knee bends and heel raises
9. Knee stretches

Shoulders

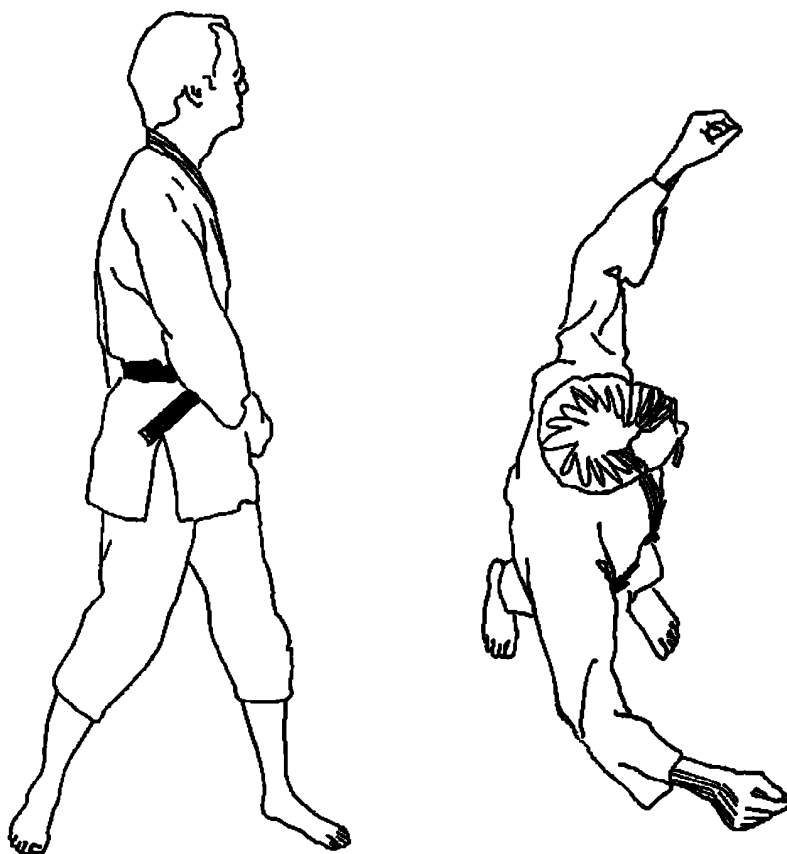
10. Dropping one arm (*udemawashi undo*)
11. Dropping both arms forward and reverse
12. Dropping both arms forward and reverse with One-Point.
13. Wrist shaking (*tekubi-shindo undo*).

1. Torso Turning

Turning the trunk, arms swinging from side to side.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
L	L	R	R	L	L	R	R

1. Rotate One-Point, turning trunk and arms.
2. Arms rise to eye level at the mid-point of movement (top view). Chest turns 90 degrees side to side, arms wrapping around chest (side view).
 - Head stays with chest.
 - Chest moves and arms follow.
 - Only arms move (body remains still) on the second count.
 - No bend at the waist.



2. Bending Side to Side

This appears to be the old familiar side bend exercise from gym class but it isn't. It is, in part, a shoulder exercise.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
L	L	R	R	L	L	R	R

1. On the first movement, bend to the side allowing the arm to stretch up and over the head, palm down.
2. On the second movement, trunk remains where it is. Upper arm bends over head at elbow.
 - Lower arm hangs completely relaxed at the side.
 - Head and neck stay aligned with trunk.

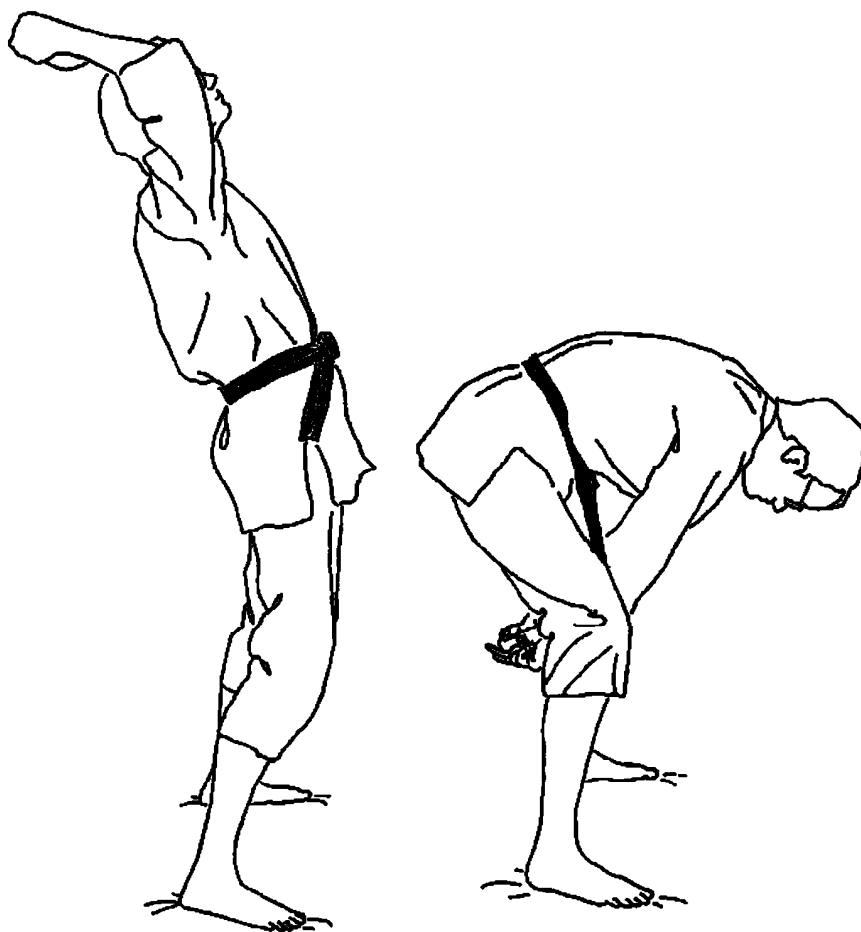


3. Bending Forward and Backward

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
F	F	B	B	F	F	B	B

Beginning with feet shoulder width apart and arms overhead,

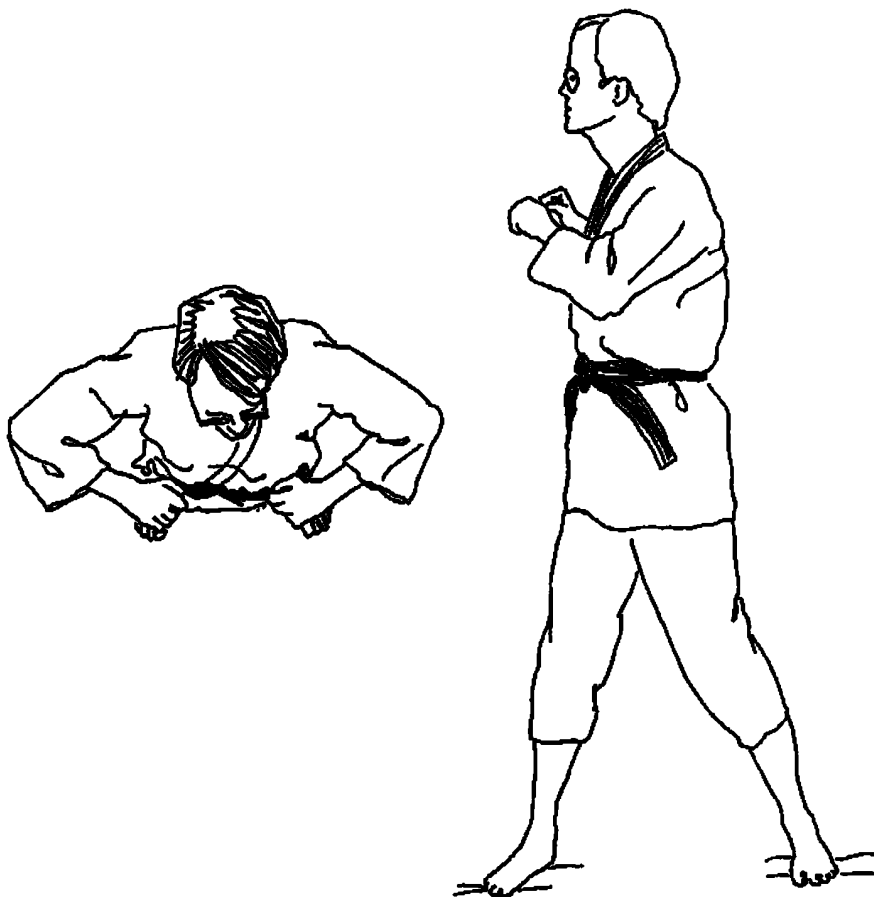
1. Bend forward (F), *throwing* the hands through the legs as though whooshing a football to someone behind you. Continue the arm swing through the legs, completely, as far as they will go but do not compress the chest by bringing the arms close together.
2. On the backward motion (B), bend back, arms following. Arms extend straight overhead and continue backward like an H, not coming together in a ^.
 - Palms are open.
 - Eyes are straight ahead relative to head.



4. Shoulder-Blade Exercise

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
L	L	R	R	L	L	R	R

1. This exercise is similar to Exercise 1 (Torso Turning) but elbows are bent, at shoulder height, and in a line with the plane of the back. Head and back turn together to about 130 degrees.
 - Body moves arms during the initial movement.
 - The rear arm moves on second count only.

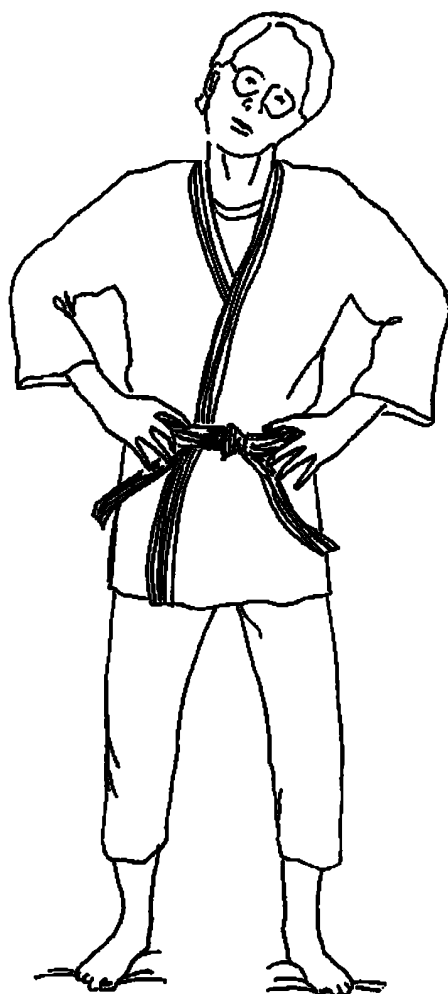


5. Tilting Head From Side-to-Side

A lateral neck exercise done by tilting the head from side to side.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
L	L	R	R	L	L	R	R

1. With hands on hips, bend neck to shoulder.
 - Do not raise the shoulder to meet head.
 - Think of *stretching* and loosening the stretching side rather than *compressing* the other side.
 - Head need not return to center; just stretch-release.
 - Eyes and head remain forward and do not twist off axis.

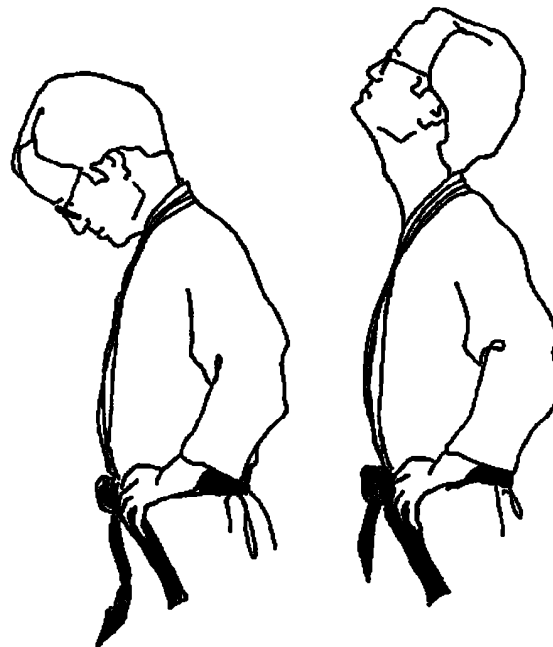


6. Head Tilting Front to Back

A stretch for the front and back of the neck. This exercise seems to cause the most problems during *ki* testing usually because of tilting the head past the center plane of the body. It is done by rotating the head, by tilting the chin up, not by rotating the base of the neck.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
F	F	B	B	F	F	B	B

1. With hands are on hips, drop chin to chest.
2. Tilt chin to ceiling.
 - Rather than pushing the chin into the chest (compression), think of stretching the back of the neck.
 - To check yourself say "ahhhh" throughout. Choking or strangling noises are a sure sign of compression.

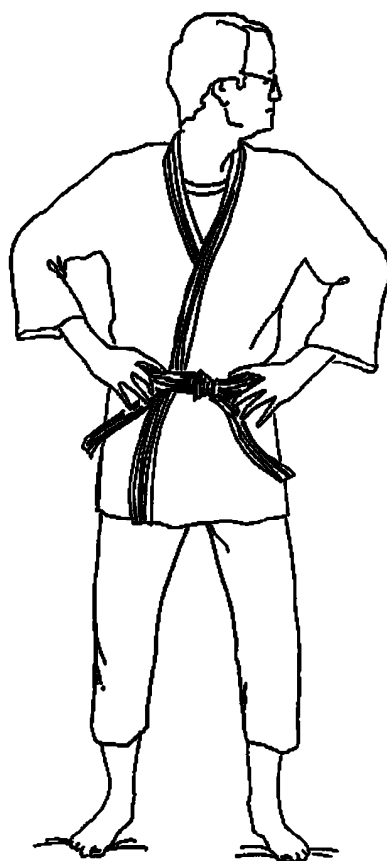


7. Looking From Side To Side

A neck exercise, turning the head from left to right.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
L	L	R	R	L	L	R	R

1. With hands on hips, look over alternate shoulders without twisting the trunk or raising the shoulders (and keeping the head vertical),.
2. Return head to center position.
 - Do the exercise while walking. If you do not return head (and eyes) to center you will become badly disoriented.
 - Partners facing each other while doing this exercise on count should only see the front of the partner's face — never the side.

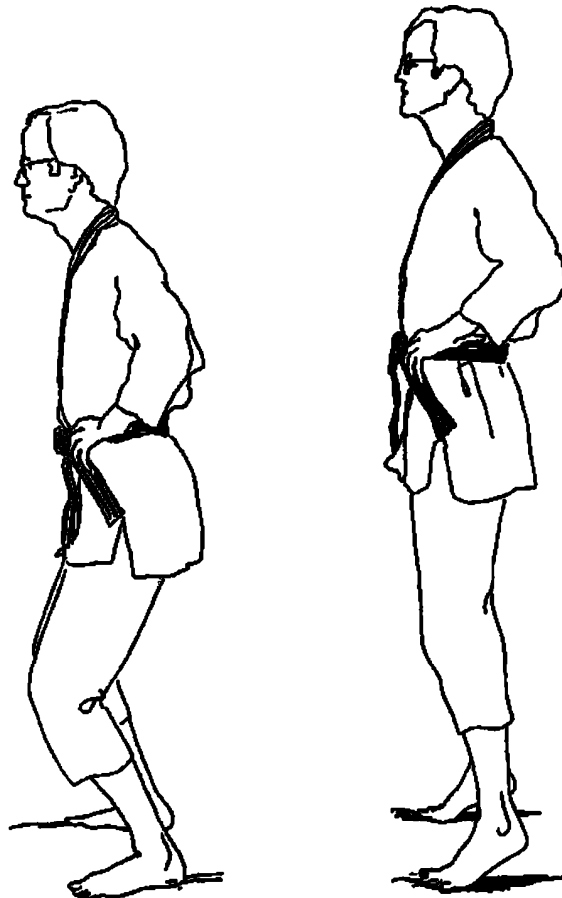


8. Knee Bends And Heel Raises

These are small, rhythmic knee bends that concentrate on dropping One-Point while helping you to find the balls of your feet. Bend knees on the first two DOWNS.

1	2		3	4	5	6		7	8
D	D	UP	D	D	D	D	UP	D	D

1. Hands on hips, feet a bit more than shoulder-width apart.
2. Drop DOWN-up-DOWN-then UP on toes and down-down onto heels. (down-down-UP-down-down).
 - Emphasize the *down* (dropping weight underside), not the up.
 - The *up* is only a means of getting to the next *down*.



9. Knee Stretches

This is an exercise to loosen and stretch the knees and hamstrings.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
L	L	R	R	L	L	R	R

1. Extend leg with toe flexed.
2. Press down gently on the knee.
 - The motion is *down* with the leg, not *in* against the knee.
 - Think of *stretching* the back of the leg, not of pushing down the knee.

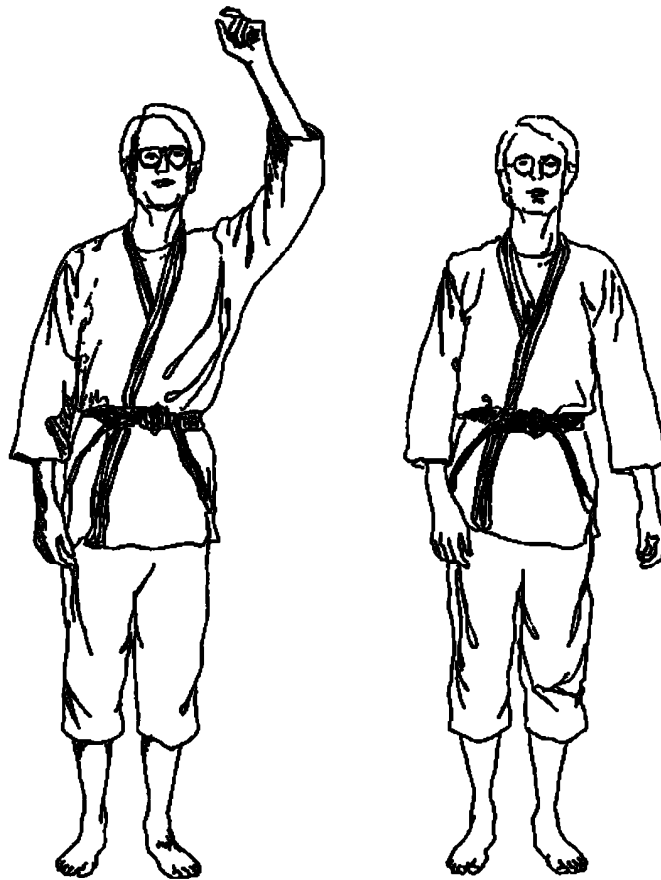


10. Arm-Dropping

With this exercise (*Udemawashi-Undo*) the rhythm changes to a single motion per count. This is not an exercise in *rotating* the arm around the shoulder. It is arm *dropping*.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
L	L	L	L	R	R	R	R

1. Raise left arm as high over the head as possible without straightening elbow.
2. Drop the left arm forward (and return) four times.
3. Drop the right arm forward (and return) four times.



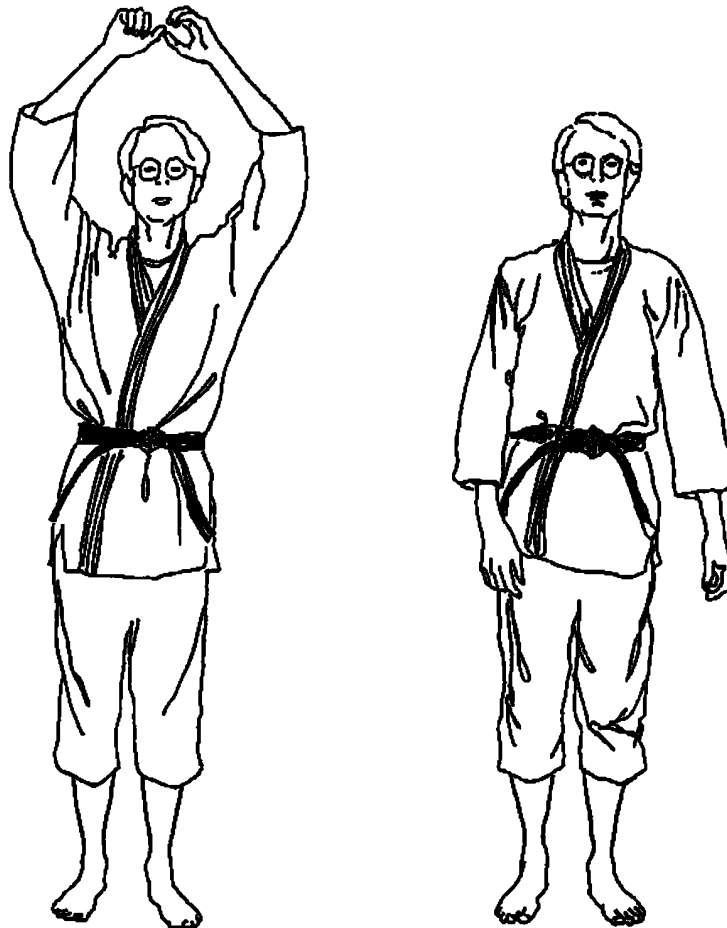
11. Dropping Both Arms

This is the two-armed version of the Arm-Dropping Exercise (*Udemawashi Undo*) done forward and in reverse.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
F	F	B	B	F	F	B	B

1. Raise left arm as high over the head as possible without straightening elbow.
2. Drop the left arm forward (and return) four times.
3. Drop the right arm forward (and return) four times.

The tendency is to raise One-Point while raising arms; the challenge is to leave One-Point in place while simply returning the arms to their starting position. Looking up through fingers you should see fingers and ceiling — not walls or thumbs. A sword is held overhead in this same position. When arms are lower, they restrict the view of the surroundings. Arms held correctly do not.

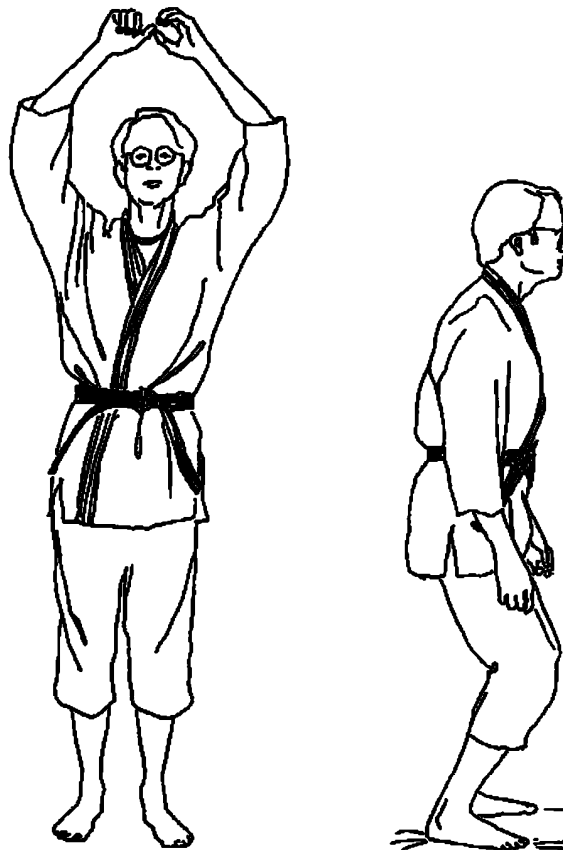


12. Dropping Both Arms While Dropping One-Point

This is the two-armed version of the Arm-Dropping Exercise (*Udemawashi-Undo*) dropping weight and One-Point.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
F	F	B	B	F	F	B	B

1. Raise both arms straight up.
2. Drop both arms while dropping One-Point.
3. As arms ascend, return to starting position.



13. Wrist-Shaking Exercise

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>half</i>	<i>half</i>	<i>half</i>	<i>half</i>	<i>half</i>	<i>half</i>	<i>half</i>	<i>half</i>

As Arm-Dropping exercise ends (with arm up),

1. Continue the motion by dropping arm and blending the downward motion into vigorous shaking of the wrists (*tekubi-shindo undo*).
2. Decrease the physical movement by half with each count. As physical movement decreases, visualize the molecules vibrating and moving.

